

A Manual 2
OF *E. 16. 44*
DIVINE
CONSIDERATIONS,
Delivered and concluded by
the Reverend
THOMAS WHITE.

Deut. 32. 29.

*O that men would be wise ! that
they would understand ! that
they would consider the last
things !*

Hierem. 12. 11.

*All the earth is become desolate
with desolation, because there is
not a man that considers.*

Translated out of the Original
Latine Copie.



Printed in the year,
MDCLV.

1584:90



To his honoured
Cousin,
JOHN COTES
of *Woodcote*,
Esquire.

SIR,

Those endearing ex-
pressions, which I,
beyond my merit or expecta-
tion, received heretofore
from my worthy friend, your
indulgent Father; and those
other due respects which I

A 2

owe

The Epistle

owe unto that Name and Family whereof I am a branch, ingage me to pre-fixe your Name in the Frontispiece of this little work. I dare confidently put the same into your hands as a solid piece, and deserving your regard. And albeit I am neither ambitious of honour, nor fearfull of censure, yet I desire you to give it protection; who notwithstanding you have a different sense from me in points of Religion; yet I
hope

Dedicatorie.

hope you are not so estranged, but that you dare accept a book, presented by a kinsman, who is moreover, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate
Servant,

W. C.

From my chamber this
day of the memoriall of
our Lords Passion,

1655.



To the Reader.

Although this compendious Treatise will not admit a large Preface, yet I shall venture to give in few words a civill account, which I hope will not much wrong your patience.

In the first place, I must remove all honour from my self, it being due unto
to

To the Reader.

to him, who composed the considerations set down in this little Manual, assuring you, he is one, who for his generall and ratiōnall knowledge is the wonder of this age; yet I shall be silent in his commendations, lest some should think I say too much, and others I am sure will esteem all that I can say too little: It is enough to tell you they are Mr. *White's*.

A 4 They

To the Reader.

They were dictated by him to divers Gentlemen then under his charge, and the objects of his care, as fast as his pious soul conceived them, which breaking forth expressed it self in an active and burning charity. Behold therefore deep sallies proceeding from a zealous heart. They are not a miscellany of fragments stolen out of other mens works; but a sinewy discourse, issuing from
from

To the Reader.

from a profound judgement, compacted together, and tied up with such a strength of reason, so close, and pressing the motives so home, that Vice hath nothing to colour her deformity, which he hath not unmasked; nor have the Vertues any lustre to set forth their inviting beauties, which are not likewise by him discovered.

Finally, that man who
is but meanly considera-
A 5 tive;

To the Reader.

tive, must be mainly defective in his capacity, if he doth not easily of himself fall upon firm resolutions to perform the duties correspondent to a good Christian. And if yet either a dulness of nature, or a quickness of unmortified affections, make the soul cold and drie in the consideration of spirituall objects; the Authour comes in again at every turn, and assists with conclusions, suggested,

To the Reader.

sted, and substantially
raised upon the firme
Basis of his wel-ground-
ed motives.

As for the persons
to whom he delivered
them, they were Gentle-
men of good condition,
well qualified, and Ca-
tholicks; who yet (by
an unhappy mistake of
some seduced Zelots)
were therefore disesteem-
ed and cast off, as be-
ing scarcely either good
Christians, or loyall Sub-
jects.

To the Reader.

jects. An error nourished by some of our greatest (whose honour and name I spare) and so far drove on by design, under pretence of securing the State, their temporall Interest, and the new-established Gospel; that now at length they have lost and undone themselves, their best Subjects and Friends, and the Formalities (though that be least to be lamented) of their supposed Church,

To the Reader.

Church, and all that flourish of Religion whereunto they pretended; the storm rising (according to Gods judgements) in another quarter, where some of them did least fear it. But in the meantime, while they ruffled it in their glory, many honest Catholick Christians lost both life and fortunes. Nor had these distressed Gentlemen any other comfort, but their prayers, joyned with
the

To the Reader.

the practise of vertues,
and a good conscience,
for which they suffered.

To the almighty, whose
loynes are girded with
power, they offered up
their daily supplications,
beseeching him to regard
and pity his holy Spouse,
the Church; to cast an eye
of mercy upon his ser-
vants misery; to look gra-
ciously upon their religi-
on & innocency; to grant
them patience, obedience,
and humility; to mollifie
the

To the Reader.

the obdurate hearts of
their adversaries, & in the
bowels of his eternall
charitie, for his son Christ
Jesus sake, to recall, and
receive into the bosome
of his Church, their se-
duced, yet still their dear-
ly-beloved Countrymen.
Such were their weapons
to advance Religion, such
was their armour to de-
fend themselves, and such
use they made of the con-
siderations & conclusions
to be seen in this ensuing
Treatise. Where-

To the Reader.

Wherein, towards the latter end, you shall find some Meditations composed properly for those, who after a long time spent in praier and study, having mortified their own wills, were called by God and their superiours to assist their Countrey in an active life, and to undertake the sublime function of Priesthood. And albeit those considerations of single life, and some other points more
imme

To the Reader.

immediately conducing
to that particular state,
are not so generally con-
cerning all men; yet I
would not defraud thee
of whatsoever was in the
originall Copie.

I was willing therefore
to dress those Meditatiōs
also in our *English* habit,
since the least spirituall
profit of the Reader is in-
finitely more worth then
all my labours; and I ve-
rily believethere be many
who will read them, and
make

To the Reader.

make good use of them,
learning daily more and
more to esteem and in-
crease that talent w^{ch} God
hath given them, for the
benefit of their own souls,
& the salvation of others,
and to watch and guard
their steps warily, when
they see to what a high
pitch of perfection they
are obliged by vertue of
their profession, how pe-
rillous and pernicious
every the least slip may
prove to themselves, and
how

To the Reader.

how scandalousto others,
being to act upon a slip-
pery stage, before the eyes
of many curious obser-
vers. God forbid that they
should cause his Name to
be blasphemed, his holy
Spouse to be despised, or
his sacred Priesthood to
be vilified among the na-
tions which do not know
him; when as their Saint-
like vertues, as well as
their sublime vocation,
ought to make them a
spectacle of reverence to
Angels

To the Reader.

Angels and men, Nor will those discourses be only profitable to such as are, or should be in a state of perfection; but they also who humbly creep along, & lead a secular life; may among other good lessons, learn to obey and honor that celestial state, whereof he ought to acknowledge himself much unworthy, who ever best deserves it.

Lastly, I assure you that although I extremely liked

To the Reader.

ked the Latine piece, and loved the Authour for it; yet being contented with the Originall, I was not ambitious to translate it, by reason of difficulties, and those more then many will imagine, untill I was solicited and engaged, and had the help of a powerfull friend. And then also, at first, I intended it onely for the private use of my Familie, neither did I therefore dress it up
so

To the Reader.

so accurately, as otherwise I would have done; albeit to my utmost capacitie I delivered the sense of the Originall, and followed it closely, it being that which I principally aimed at. But now since I publish it, and invite all, especially the honourable Societie of those, who were once my fellow Collegiats, to peruse it in our mother tongue, I could wish I had made it more polished,
and

To the Reader.

and pleasing. However
(such as the Translation
is) I am confident it is
worth your reading, and
will with Gods grace
make you happie, if seri-
ously put in practice; with-
out which, a hastie run-
ning over it will onely
prove a fruitless curiosi-
tie, and not able to at-
tain or reach that end,
for which it was either
composed or translated.
For certainly, when the
day of judgement shall
come,

To the Reader.

come, saith *Thomas a Kempis*, it will not be examined what we have read, but what we have done; nor how well we have spoken, but how religiously we have lived.






*Of the Beginning, and End
of Man.*

I. Meditation.

*Of the creation of the
World.*

I  Consider how God, whereas he was of himself essentially Being, and ever most blessed, the Quintessence of all good being reconcentred into his indivisible Essence, by the necessity of the first and highest contradiction, pressed with an intimate weight and act of his bountie, flowed forth, and in a manner squeezed himself into whatsoever is besides.

2. Consider, how admirably and
B fully

fully he powred forth and ordain-
ed the nature of the Universe, with-
out any matter to be presupposed,
and without any help of additionall
assistance: how conveniently he tied
together all its parts, according to
his eternall wisdom, and so fitly
accommodated them, that nothing
did superabound, nor was there any
thing that could be desired, wanting.

3. Add to these, the immensity
of the Creature, set in array almost
with an infinite extension beyond
the reach of all humane understand-
ing, which yet in all its hugeness falls
away, and sinks into the abyss as it
were of nothing, in comparison of
its Creator; who, if it had been con-
formable to his free purpose, and the
most absolute counsels of his wise-
dome, could in the very twinkling
of an eye, have as infinitely exceed-
ed this his mighty work, as that
doth surpass and exceed an invifible
atome, which by a perpetuall divi-
sion is even ready to passe into no-
thing.

Con-

Divine Considerations. 3

Conclude then, what kind of disposition and affection thy soul ought to bear towards God : whether thou comparest the excellent infinity of his nature to thy self, but a contemptible part of his meaneſt work ; or that thou doſt contemplate the force and height of his wiſedome, piercing and paſſing through what is deepeſt in creatures ; or that thou laboureſt to weigh, and adore, the moſt perfect and holy wayes of his bounty: leſt thou be included in the damnation of that blindneſſe of men, who knowing God, do not give unto him honour and glory.

2. Meditation.

Of the Fall of the Angels.

1. **C**ONſider how, when God had placed innumerable armies of celeftiall Spirits in the higheſt part of his admirable Fabrick, of which every one, even to the very laſt, in naturall excellency, and

fulness of Being, exceeded the whole materiall Sphear of Creatures; and that besides all this, they were elevated by supernaturall gifts to a conversation and acquaintance with God himself: neverthelesse, whereas a main multitude of them, proud of that beauty which was given them, forgot their Creator, and took final content in themselves; he in the twinkling of an eye plucked them down, all fettered in the cables of hell, and for ever shut them up in the lowest and basest dungeons of corporeall putrefaction, and by an irrevocable sentence, deputed them to intolerable and eternall punishments, without any the least hope of pardon, and this for one onely sin, committed in a moment. So that those princes and powers of the Heavens, and commanders of the Universe, through obstinacy of sinning, became haunters of darknesse, and ugly creatures, more weak and unworthy then the most contemptible man alive.

Con-

Conclude ; if God would not spare so excellent a nature, and the very prime grace of his world, and work, but in a most severe and eternall judgement, changed it into so deformed a vilenesse, for having committed but one sin ; what hope is there left for thee, a contemptible slave of flesh and bloud, if for the love of dung and mud thou shalt despise thy Creatour, and cleave to sin ? Whilest it is permitted, whilest thou hast time, shake off thy drow-sinesse, and fear, and pacifie that Lord, who is jealous of his honour.

3. Meditation.

Of the Creation of Man.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how that God, when he had built up the admirably cunning Architecture of the corporeall World, at length formed thy Parents, and in them thy self, as a finall end of so fair a work. The body he fitted out of the com-

mon Elements with a more then usuall comelineffe: deprived indeed of such naturall fences and assistance, wherewith other creatures are born; but of so great use and service, that it might well stir up the envy of the rest of the creatures, every one in their own kind, whether we respect its beauty, commodity, or pleasure.

2. Consider besides, how profusely be bestowed all those things which are round about us upon man; how the East unto the West, the South unto the North, as if they were Villages depending upon a great City, do expose one to the other their native commodities in a full market. The vast depths of the Sea unknown to man, cannot secure the Fishes; no more then the huge spaces of the spreading convex can protect the flying Foul: the strange profundity of earth and waters, heaped upon them, preserves not those Gems and Metals which are hid within their bowels. Look about thee,

Divine Considerations. 7

thee, and see how the whole world, as great as it is, doth serve thee by proportionate particles of it self.

3 Add now unto these, the glorious day, and the beautifull night, the interchangeable course and season of the year, and times, which are chained together for thy use, with a more strict and severe bondage, then if they advanced, or made their stops onely at thy beck and commanding pleasure.

4 But above all things, ponder well the commanding soul, in whose eye the rest, though so great, are but base and triviall, how with a never-resting motion it tends, and grasps at the Crown and Fountain of all things, and leaving whatsoever is besides at such a despicable distance: as cannot be imagined, reposeth in him alone, who is to this our Universe, an unfathomable and incomprehensible Universe.

Conclude; if what thou art, thou hast received; what ever thou art, must be returned back to him again.

If thou hast received the service of all things about thee, through all, and in all, his will alone is to be observed. If those things whereof thou canst not reach the knowledge, by his command do attend upon thee; whatsoever is under the power of thy understanding, let it serve him. And lastly, if thou art created lesse then he alone, do not through a degenerate basenesse, suffer any creature to have dominion over any of thy affections.

4. Meditation.

Of originall Iustice.

1. **C**ONSIDER ; whereas the way by nature appointed to commence to Beatitude was obscure, hard and incumbred, both by reason of the senses giddinesse, wandering rather any way, then keeping to the right ; as also, through the weaknessse of the understanding running
astray

astray into errors, labyrinths, and mazes without end; as likewise, through the yoking of the will with flesh and blood, and plunging in the same; and that few, or none at all, did seem able to force a way through; lastly, the commensuration of our perfect good, compared to the poverty of our meanness, was such, that even in possession it might be neglected by a perverse and ill-tainted affection: Goodness it self was not satisfied, untill he cast into the new-created soul seeds of his very self in the native vastness, and made it fruitfull with the Divinity it self, that it might germinate and spring forth into the proper and naturall possession of it self, which should captivate and swell up all the capacity of affection with an overflowing fulness, accomplish an immediate access for us unto him, by an uninterrupted adhesion of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and procure a joyfull and pleasant way to Blisse,

both by intellectuall, and temporall
successefulnesse.

2. Adde, the brooks of grace,
which were derived upon the ser-
vile powers of the soule; the discourse
guarded, that it might not any wayes
fail; the motions of the unruly and
floating sensuality made gentle, and
pacified; the ruines of the decay-
ing body prevented; and the jour-
ney of both portions made smooth
to pass unto Eternity.

3. What need is there to men-
tion the blessed aspect of the rest of
the world, the tractable condition
of beasts, and the bounty and prone-
nesse of the earth to be manured,
inviting man to command its obe-
dience?

4. Wonder at the ministeries of
celestiall Spirits, and those Princes
of concealed glory being sent to
take the charge of thee, who are not
onely thy companions, but in a
manner servants for thy profit.

Conclude, that how much thou
art lesse then all the mercies of
God,

Divine Considerations. 111

God, pouring himself out beyond that which thy nature demandeth; beyond his own Ordinance and appointment; so much, if thou wilt be gratefull, thou oughtest to erect thy self above thy self, and what thou art able: and chiefly remember, that whatsoever true goodnesse is in thee, it is all above thee. Bewary, lest forgetfull, thou arrogatest any thing to thy self, or esteem thy self any thing, or judge any man, or undertake to do any thing of thy self, being mindfull of thy own poverty, and the divine greatnesse.

5. Meditation.

5. Meditation.

Of the Fall of Man.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how our want of Spirit did cast us forth with confusion, out of that eminent height of Glory wherein God had placed us. He gave unto *Adam* a helper, in whom he should have loved Gods and his own similitude; but he, through a foolish concupiscence, and sensuall, became a deserter of the divine commandment, and betrayed himself to banishment, and perpetuall miseries, with so many, and such infinite ages of his posterity.

2. Consider, how death is born with us; and that the fore-runners of it are in a manner worse then death it self, diseases, griefs, and afflictions daily pressing themselves upon us; wrapped up in ignorance, as in the clouts of our Infancy,

fancy, in the very noon-day of our actions we grope and are amazed, we are hurried into precipices of all kinds, with an unbridled and stormy affection, being neither able to obtain, nor so much as acknowledge truth and felicity, which lyeth inticing us even at our very feet, untill the short day of this mortall light being suddenly finished, we are cast forth in a full flood into an eternall night of unspeakable mischief.

3. Where are now the heads of those Monarchs and Emperours, who made the world to tremble? Where are those martiall armies of mighty Conquerours? Where are the cunning and crafty fetches of State Politicians? Where are those soaring wits of Philosophers, which comprehended the secrets of Heaven and Earth? Where are those admirable works of Artificers, that have proved nothing impossible for industry to perform? Where is the vigorous perswasion
of

of Oratours, or the alluring sweetnesse of Poets? Through the morsell of one apple, for the pleasure of a moment, being intangled in the boggs of Hell, they live, and are lusty onely to torment themselves.

Conclude, in how great humility and care we must live, in the expectation of so strict an account of Justice, and so many dangers, in which whole ages of people have been shipwracked, and cast headlong into the bottomlesse depth of eternall perdition.

6. Meditation.

Of Sin.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that a sin is committed as often as the soul is drawn away by an affection of any thing from the desire of that which is its true good, unto which it is essentially and naturally inclined.

2. Sin therefore, as much as it hath from sinfulness, is contrary to Nature ; as heat is an enemy to water : it is a disease of the soul, and weakens it in the operations which are connaturall unto it ; it is a blemish , deforming her beauty.

3. Again , sithence reason was given to us as a Governesse, and aimeth at nothing else then what is absolutely best to be done, all things being considered ; it is necessary that he who runs astray
from

from it by sin, doth by so doing fall into mischiefs; and by how much the sin is more grievous, by so much are the mischiefs more grievous into which he falls.

4. Now because the desire of that which is according to reason is fundamentall, and in a manner established in the soul, and therefore cannot be extinguished; it is necessary, that the soul of a sinner remain divided against it self, alwayes wavering and inconstant.

5. Moreover, whereas this desire is in that part of the soul which knows it self, & follows her own motions; it is necessary that the life of a sinner be subject to continuall pains, griefs and miseries, because that something alwayes happens contrary to the mind and appetite.

6. Lastly, since whatsoever thing besides doth therefore breed torment, because it produceth an ill affection, that is, grief; but sin is intrinsically the worst of affections;
it

it is therefore necessary, that among all mischiefs sin is the most singular and chief.

Conclude, how horrible and grievous the mischief is, in which thou and the world art drowned through *Adams* sin. Arise therefore up with thy whole strength, and free thy self with the utmost endeavours of thy soul.

7. Meditation.

The effects of Sin.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how many and how great mischiefs sinne hath brought upon mankind, in all parts both of the body and soul: what a grosse darknesse it hath brought upon the understanding: so that in naturall things, what the world is, and the celestially globes, what the constitution of the earth is, upon which we tread, very few know any thing that is worth the knowledge.
But

But concerning God and the Intel-
ligences, which have no bodies, be-
sides those things which are taught
us by faith, we believe mere dreams.

2. What should I speak, how
wholly ignorant we are of humane
actions, and what belongeth to our
very selves? What is past, we hear
not; that which is to come, we are
by no means able to comprehend;
those very things which are present,
which we our selves touch, and
which in some fashion compell us
not to be ignorant of them, we not-
withstanding penetrate them not.
No man can tell what he knows,
nor whereof he is ignorant, how
able, or how weak: what will not
an undertaker promise, being in ve-
ry deed of himself able to bring no-
thing to perfection?

3. Now if we but look upon the
miseries of the body; From whence
arise so many strifes and conten-
tions, and such losses of the goods
of Fortune, but sometimes through
negligence, and at other times
through

through rashnesse or overmuch covetousnesse? From whence are so many wars and slaughters, and the threads of so many mens lives cut asunder in one day? From whence are so many become maimed, and creeples, affected by mutual wounds? From whence are the swarms of so many of the rest of diseases; whereof some are common and naturall? This man gets a Feaver by his intemperancy, another a Pleurisie by his immoderate labour: besides particular torments of the intralls appropriate to particular vices; the Dropsie or the Gout through too much drinking; the venereall Infection, or the running of the reins, which pursue impure lusts. How great a part of Man-kind are intangled in these calamities? and their contagion spareth not even such as are most innocent.

Conclude with an acknowledgement of, what a strange monster it is that encompasseth thee: cry out, and roar at the sight of it, and

and with the whole extent of thy power labour to shake off all incumbrances, and free thy self, and thine.

8. Meditation.

Of Death.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how the last end of the foresaid effects of sin is death, which in one moment, in the very twinkling of an eye, ravisheth away all that which in the whole course of thy life was most amiable, and with which thou wert most acquainted; as the food and delights of thy taste, the vanities of thy garments, the curiosities of thy eyes and ears, the pleasing inticements of smell and touch, thy Palaces, Farms, Honours, Dignities, Power, Friends, Wife, Children, the body it self, and all the bodies interior affections: so that there remains to thy self thy soul alone, and
that

that all naked, which before thou didst hardly take notice of by some obscure reflexion.

2. Which soul moreover is wearied with the weight of terrene affections, and chained with corporeall phantasmes, trembling with the ignorance of it self, & of such things as are presently to come upon it, astonished with the unknown account of life, torn away by violence from the embracement of the body, ignorant of all things, and fearing the worst.

3. To all this is joyned the extreme torment of that sad hour: for if the losse of our liberty or substance, if the departure for a few dayes from the place of our friends or their company, if the extension or cramp of the sinewes, if the dissolution of any sensitive particle causeth such intolerable griefs, that the greatnesse of the sense of it doth sometimes take away sense it self: of what a strange nature will that hour be, when bitter death at once shall divide us
from

from all these, without any the least hope of returning.

4. Adde, what will make that houre more grievous, the love of that which we must loose, the despair of recovery, the foul conscience of the sins we have committed, and the horreur of future punishments.

5. But that which is of exceeding terrour, is, that no hour or moment of our life is free from death : in the morning who can promise to himself to see the evening, or at the evening who can promise himself the next morning ? A cup of water, a morsell of meat, the biting of some beast, an intemperate exercise, and some things by the onely sight of them do break asunder the brittle thread of our life. We are the scorn of all chances ; the slip of a foot, the error of a hand, a stone falling down, and infinite other accidents do force us from our lives.

Conclude, that sin is abolished by a just fear of death, acknowledge

ledge it to be the cause of all thy miseries, and that the onely remedy is to abstain from it, and continually to kill it in thy body.

9. Meditation.

Of a damned Soul.

1. **C**ONSIDER, a Soul oppressed with terrene and corporeall affections when it is separated from the body, with what horrible pains and miseries it is intangled and afflicted.

First of all, because it is in no manner able to obtain those things which it pursues with her chief affection; honours, for example, pleasures and the like, the time for the injoying whereof is now past.

2. Besides, she is tormented with her desires, which are contrary, and fighting among themselves, when as one of the contraries which she coveteth cannot be had, nor

nor consist with the other .

3. Besides, that all these desires combat, and mortally disagree with that inbred appetite of good according to reason, which she carries with her in her very substance, the most vehement above all her desires, and never possibly to be rooted out.

4. Furthermore, that it cannot possibly but see the greatnesse of that which is true beatitude, both according to her nature, and grace likewise ; which are all lost, and to be despaired of: nor yet can it despise it when it is seen.

5. Adde to these, that infinite fewell of envy and impatience, to see the glory of them who waged the same warre with them in this life, with like, or perchance worse conditions, yet now injoy eternall felicity.

6. On the contrary side, she cannot be ignorant of the vanity of those vile goods, which the soul hath preferred before blisse; which being most base, flying away for all eternity,

nity, and irrecoverable, forsake her still most eagerly gaping after them; yet she, transported towards them with the whole activity and violence of a free soul, with a greater force then what is heavy descends, then fire burns, or the Sun runs the ring of his circumference, is without restraint perpetually pined and maugred.

7. And which is the grievoudest thing of all, the fleeting passage of time being over once, and ever, with an unchangeable and unvaried activity, roaring it cries out, and ever shall cry; nor shall be able to fail or die, being insufferable, and execrable to her self, to heaven, to Saints, to the damned also, and all creatures besides; being become an eternall monument of the Divine anger, and of a creatures baseness.

10. Meditation.*The torments of a damned Body.*

1. **C**ONSider, that since all grief and malady of the Body, proceeds out of the strength and activity of the Soul, it is necessarily consequent, that the very sufferings of the body shall be infinitely more vehement after its resurrection, when as the soul being free from the necessity of a body, doth act her operations by her full self; and the body being altogether subject to the same soul, without any mixture of contrary, or repugnance, without measure doth receive the impressions of the soul, by the whole capacity of the subject, how great soever it be.

2. Again, the phantasie will then be infinitely more powerfull to create strange and most fearfull images,

images, which will fill and overwhelm the man with an instant terrour, and anguish most presentially, and round besieging, not concerning some one object onely, but together about all those objects which with abomination it detesteth. The appetite also, like to a kind of infinite Ocean, will overflow with a deluge of unbridled motions, beyond all imagination.

3. Ponder now seriously in thy soul the miserable pains of the Gout, Colick, Stone, and all other diseases, the distension and convulsion of the nerves and sinews, and whatsoever torments the mischievous cunning of cruell tyranny hath found out: and suppose them all to be applied to thy whole body, and to every particle of the same, chiefly to those wherein thou hast been ingratefull to God, and heaped up the treasure of Gods wrath; and yet be certain, in all thy deepest Meditations, thou art far

short of the truth of things, nor canst once imagine what horrible torments shall thoroughly pierce, and settle in a damned body.

4. Contemplate further the vexing power of the eternall fire, and above other miseries, the horrid presence and behaviour of the most hideous ministers of the divine punishment.

Conclude, whether the experiment of such an eternity can please thee: remember in what continual danger of the same thou dost live; thy own actions, and very light occasions are driving thee on, and drawing thee into it, unless thou beware.

II. Meditation.

The condition of Adams Posteritie after his Fall.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how notwithstanding that most heavie punishment.

nishment, whereby all mankind was banished out of the delights of Paradise, and the unhappy memory which *Adam* and *Eve* did inculcate continually to their children, both of the happiness which they had lost, and what they did in the present suffer; the first parents of mankind were scarce dead, when as all their posterity, without order and shame, rebelled against God, and Nature, so much, that of infinite thousands of them, whereunto they were encreased, there was scarce one just man found, upon whom the mercy of God might extend itself, without an injury committed against his Justice: for the Senses infected with originall corruption, and thereby taken up with exeriour Objects, did not permit the soul to return to internall things, and the consideration of herself; and the forcible necessities of hunger, thirst, cold, and such like accidents, known by experience, by use, and continuall custome, did

sooner ensnare the soul with pernicious affections, then they could by ripeness of years, and reason, take a just care of themselves.

2. Presently, the example of the Parents leading to worldly appetites, appeared unto the children a sufficient guide and authority. Thus a forerunning deluge of iniquity, ushered in those waters, that overwhelmed the whole world; a dreadful monument of the misery of sin.

3. And yet notwithstanding all this, men were not herewith admonished, although the witnesses of so grievous a punishment remained still alive, but were deservedly dispersed for their pride; and a part, through a totall forgetfulness of the naturall light of reason, deserved to be exterminated with fire and brimstone, not one native inhabitant of a great Region, being found worthy of mercy.

Conclude, what grace and favor hath been shewn to thee by God, who

who of his only bounty hath drawn thee forth out of so universall and contagious a mischief, and the causes of so great a misery.

12. Meditation.

*Of Gods Mercy to the
Jewes.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, how that God, when he had declared by experience, that malice was so deeply rooted in man, that it was in vain to seek to keep him within bounds with examples of severity, and that the knowledge of God did degenerate into gross superstitions, and that by this means the seeds of virtue did quickly degenerate into horrid barbarisme; he resolved to discover in the second place, if knowledge were not wanting, whether the appetite would rest quietly under the conduct of reason, and thereupon made choice of one

man, and constantly instructed him with benefits, for three generations, establishing them in his love, and furcharging them with promises; and when this seemed to be done abundantly, he sent his heirs into *Egypt*, where they suddenly increased into a vast Nation.

2. And now they were no less then six hundred thousand fighting men, when he sent to them a Law-giver with prodigies and wonders, such as no memory of man did ever see the like: and further, himself pronounced a Law with his own mouth, before the whole people, in terreur and exceeding majesty, and did labour to imprint it in their hearts and memories, both with benefits and threats, with punishment of the *Egyptians*, and those Nations which he overthrew, and utterly rooted out in their sight; as also with their own sufferings, whom, in forty yeares, their children being placed in their steads, he changed; that there might not remain
among

among them such as should remember the *Egyptian* impurities; by giving them miraculously their meat and drink, their garments, and their victories, a moderate temperature being given night and day, by a cloud and fire, exceeding promises of his protection being likewise assured to them for the future, if they would but observe his Law.

1. Conclude, in admiring the all-bounty of God, and his care in cultivating mankind, how he doth as it were labour about it.

2. Again, conclude, how great the misery of our kind is, how deeply rooted, that it is not sufficient to be learned, nor to know the Law of God; but the greatest labour is to manage the appetite. What pains must thou take, that by continuall Meditation thou mayest renew the memory with the thoughts of our Christian Profession, and deeply imprint it, urging the affection to remain! For what

chanced to all these people, if thou dost but mark it, thou shalt also observe the same to be in effect acted in thy self.

13. Meditation.

*Of Gods continued mercy, and
Mans misery.*

1. **C**Onsider, how God brought the Nation of the *Jewes*, a Law being given unto them, into a Countrey which flowed with milk and honey. How he established their politicall government with his own hand, in which every one should eat of his own Vine, and rest under his own Fig-tree; where there should be no exactour, no molester among them. He instituted also so many Festivall dayes, years, and times, and such ceremonies; that by reason of them it might seem impossible to have fallen from the fear of the Divinity.

2. All

2. All which notwithstanding, they fell away, and revolted from God, and were according to the quality and degree of their offence, chastised by those Nations which bordered upon them : and when they returned to God, Commanders were given them to wage their warrs, and minister justice, which were neither perpetuall, nor very eminent : but when their revolts, and fallings from God became more frequent, and that their scourges were thereupon more grievous, which they would not acknowledge to be due unto their crimes, but attributed them to the order of their Common-wealth, which had yet been instituted by the Divinity it self; Kings were granted, both *David* most valiant in warre, and *Solomon* most wise in peace; under whom as they lived in greater glory, so also in greater misery, being famous in warre, but miserable; being glorious in peace, but slavish; reaping out of their own
devi-

devises, vain ostentations in lieu of the reall blessings of peace, abundance, and justice.

3. Presently, by reason of their state and condition, ten Tribes fell to idolatry, and the other two followed after, infected with their contagion: neither did the Prophets sent by God, with God his own eloquence and wonders, profit any thing; but necessary it was they should be cast forth to the *Assyrians* and *Babylon*.

4. Notwithstanding, God brought them back again repentant, in a small number, and as it were for the last remedy subjected them to the temporall rule of Priests and Scribes, expecting in a manner, that themselves would have been kept in their duties by the bait of temporall honour, and that at least for the worlds sake, they should have retained the common people in the true service of God. And when they also looked onely upon temporall things, he raised
up

up the Pharisees, and other Regulars, with the shew of abstinence from worldly commodities, whom yet ambition and avarice did quickly blind and overthrow.

Conclude, that there was nothing more behoving, or that God in a manner could have done to his Vineyard. See what a care is necessarily to be had to thy soul, and how nothing is sufficient without the speciall assistance of God within thee. Remember that humility and earnest prayer unto God, with watchfulnesse, and continuall care, and labour, is to be joyned together; and that it is never fit for thee to think thou hast done enough, or that thou art secure, whether thou art solicitous for thy self alone, or that the charge of others be committed to thee.

14. Meditation.*Of Gods mercifull Redemption.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, how God, when other remedies did fail, was forced to the extremity of all bounty ; so that he communicated the bounty of his very self, really and identificatively uniting the self-same in one Person with the humane nature : for neither had the all-goodnesse satisfied it self, if it had been never so freely bestowed by participation, when as it might be done essentially, and entitatively ; nor when it saw humane nature by its misery thrown down into such a state, as it seemed therefore to deserve so great a commiseration and pittie, because no other remedy could be sufficient, could very goodnesse contain it self, but that it must spring forth, where
there

there was a possibility to be good.

2. Adde moreover, that the order of the rest of the works of the Divine wisdom did require, that among the second causes, there should be some firm principle of those qualities, which it caused perpetually and constantly to abide in humane nature: but of Grace, and like supernaturall gifts, seeing they are participations of the Divine Essence according to its properties, there was found no root, or stedfast foundation out of the Divine Essence to perpetuate those; therefore in humane nature by a connaturall root, it was necessary that God should become Man.

3. But otherwise also, when as the order of Grace was in such manner to exceed inferiour substances, as to equall them amongst themselves, and sometimes to exalt the lower above the higher; there was no principall cause, nor sufficiently authorizing so great an

an innovation, besides God himself the Creatour of all things.

4. And moreover, to receive an alien nature to his own, without a confusion of those natures, was the onely work of existency subsisting, and by consequence not of a received or restrained being.

5. What should we say moreover, but that the master and teacher of the secrets of the divine knowledge and wisdom, could not be, but he that did comprehend them, and to exact of a reasonable creature, accustomed to the evidence of axiomes, and demonstrations, a belief unmoveable, must be of such an one, whose authority should be more unchangeable, then nature it self, and both the one and the other proper to God alone?

6. Besides, this Oeconomy of the world, was to be governed and perfected by the ministeries of Angels, both of good, and bad, and an innovation of the order of the
Uni-

Universe to be added where it was needfull ; and therefore without doubt the work proper to the Commander of this great Universe, and the absolute Lord both of corporeall and intellectuall substances.

7. Lastly, the load of sin by a mixture of supernaturalls, with the weight of the Deity added unto it, was increased so immensely, that vertue, had it not been ennobled by the Person of God added to it, would not have been able to overmatch it.

15. Meditation.

How God became Man.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how God vouchsafed to become Man, not declining his weakness and infirmity; how he underwent hunger and thirst, and the like maladies of nature, not refusing pains and griefs inflicted from without, not
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calumnies nor reproaches, nor contempt nor infamy, neither last of all the inbred warre of the sensitive appetite against reason, being in an agony through trembling and fear, through sadness and weariness.

2. Chiefly, because indeed all these things are not evils, nor disagreeing to the Divine nature, since they are the works of his hands, and he cannot hate any thing which he hath made: again, because they could not reach to the Deity, although they pressed upon God in his humanity. But as the Sun in the dung-hill, and God, who is in hell by his essence, is neither defiled, nor of less account, by reason of the filthiness and horreur of the place: So in like manner doth the God-head neither suffer pains nor contempt, through the miseries of the humanity, although in a more sublime manner united to it.

3. Adde to these, that all things which happened unto Christ were
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in very deed main good things, and most of all to be desired : For as to a Musician, to sing, and to a Mathematician, to learn or teach ; so is it also exceeding good, and delightfull for a vertuous man to exercise himself in the substance of vertue. Now God by election and vertue, put himself upon all actions and passions.

4. Besides that, he descended to present himself a Master most perfect, and therefore to give reall examples of that whereunto his words did invite ; and to leave for us the way of true vertue trod forth by his own foot-steps.

Conclude, in like manner, to esteem none of those things, which reason and order perswade to be done, to be too low, or unworthy of thy person, especially if thou art in office, and perceivest some that are under thee slow in performing their duties: be mindfull that it is thy part, with a helpfull hand, by thy own example, to pluck the
scruple

scruples of vain Opinions out of the paths of them that are lesse wise.

16. Meditation.

*Of the Preparation for the
coming of our Sa-
viour.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that God to be Man is a work of so great excellency, that whatsoever is in the world besides is not undeservedly directed to this end. For this was created the Heaven, and Earth, and Seas, the Sun and Stars, the myriads of Angels, and the infinity of Men, eternized by mortality never failing to be repaired, and whatsoever is contained in these, or belongs unto them.

2. For this end was permitted the rupture of the Celestiall Hierarchies, by the rebellion of no mean part of them, and that all
our

our stock was to be damned in one lump.

3. For this the whole Earth, by the degrees of the fore-running Monarchies, was collected to advance the *Roman* greatness, that the Trumpet of the Gospell might reach through all the world, and rouse them up, as it were with one sounding, when it should rore out from the tops of the *Roman* hills. For although the *Romans* gained but a small part of the world with their Armies, yet they had made a passage into all the rest of the Nations of the Earth, where they had no command, by their covetousness and luxury.

4. For when as the *Grecian* wits were made to serve the *Roman* power, a crafty and outrageous lewdness left nothing unattempted, which might corrupt the manners of men. Then were the wicked superstitions of the whole world gathered together, and practised; whole ages spent in the
pro-

prodigall effusion of civill, and ackindred bloud ; a Traytorous apprehension of Innocents ; a violent robbing of guests and friends ; prodigious lusts ; new kinds of cruelty ; and whatsoever was most wicked, the same was most in honour and price.

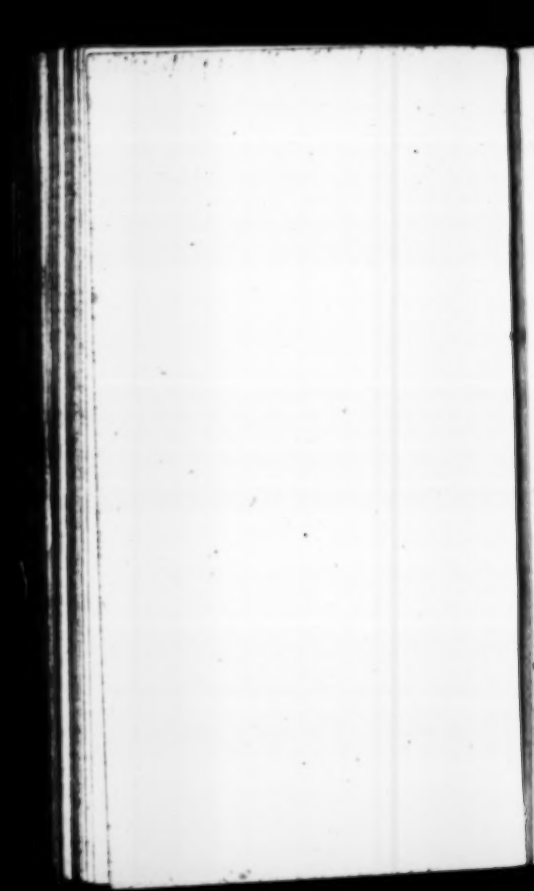
5. The Family of *Abraham*, Gods wisdome being in a manner consumed, with providing of so many sorts of remedies, and his bounty in suffering their sins, was in such a state, that a very few, but those the most chosen seeds of Vertue, remained, which were to be dispersed into the rest of the world, & there taking root and fructifying, were to leave that unhappy people abandoned, and given up as desperate unto the power of darkness.

6. Moreover, the fame of the coming of the *Messias* had already, both by ancient and new Oracles, stirred up the expectation of the whole world. The land of
Iury,

Iury, not onely by the mouths of so many Prophets, by the Law and Ceremonies; but also by the Acts of the *Patriarchs*, and by the turns of their own Commonwealth, did prophesie it. The *Sibylls*, and the *Druides*, and the answers forced from the Devills, promised the same grace; and the whole compasse of the world became such in Civill Orders, understanding, and government, as might compell, in a fashion, the divine bounty to this sublime work.

Conclude, how true a saying it is, that all is for the elect, and worketh for their good: God hath so ordained it, and it is thy fault if it be not so for thee. Adore God made man, praise the wisdom of the Creatour, acknowledge what he hath conferred by so great a bounty unto our stock, in Christ, and to us, if we be his followers.

The end of the Meditations, of the Beginning and End of Man.





Of Christian Vertues.

I. Meditation.

Of Faith.



Consider, that where-
as God is Truth it
self, by his very
own Essence, and
not by any other
thing, it is more
impossible for him to be deceived,
then for fire to be cold; and to de-
ceive, then for fire to cool: what-
soever therefore is said by him, the
same is more certain, and necessari-
ly true, then that which is seen by
sense, or demonstrated by the un-
derstanding.

Conclude, when it is manifest
that any thing is said by God, that
it is foolish to doubt of it, or to sup-
D pose

pose any reasons, though they seem never so evident, can have any truth in them; or to think them to be any other then deceitfull.

2. Meditation.

Of the Church.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how absurd a thing it is for God to give a Law or a Doctrine, and not to leave a means how those whom he would have to know and observe it, should come to it; but more especially, whereas Christ our Lord taught with so much labour and grief.

2. Again consider, that the testimony of the Catholick Church is more then humane: For that for many Congregations of men, divided by such distance of places, and long succession of times, among so many changes of State, even to this day, should agree that these very Articles were delivered unto them
by

by Christ and his Apostles, could not be brought to pass by any humane force.

3. In like manner, whereas in the same Church there was, and ever shall be, men flourishing in all Sciences and Arts; that this Doctrine notwithstanding, was never found contrary to any humane Science, Art, or either profit or pleasure, it could not proceed from the wit or invention of man.

4. That the same Doctrine, when as it contains so many Tenets, and they opposite to those disordinate affections by which men are enslaved, and of which a reason can no wayes be given out of their proper principles, and yet grew up in no age by armes, or by force, and subdued men both wise and voluptuous; and that for so many ages it hath possessed so large a kingdom, exceeds the industry and force of man.

5. Lastly, that in all Ages there should be continuall miracles, (if

there be any belief to be given to humane History) and that these should be in this Church, and in her alone; it could onely be the work of God.

Conclude, when thou understandest that the Catholick Church doth testifie, that she received some Article from God by a succession of Doctours, to behave thy self in the same manner, as if thou didst hear the same from God thy self, and that thou canst not doubt, or admit any disputes concerning the same Article, without prejudice of the Divine Truth.

3. Meditation.

*Of the Supremacy of the
See of Rome.*

I. **C**ONSIDER that, as in the natural body of any living creature, it is necessary one part should be constituted from whence life should

should be derived into the rest, and which being corrupted, the rest also presently do fail: So also we commonly see it practised in the morall body. And this is the King in his Kingdome, the Senate in an Aristocracy, and the Generall in an Army. The very same hath Christ our Lord done in the Church, having set the *Roman* among the Churches, and the Successour of Saint *Peter* among the Pastors; whom he confirmed with his own Prayer, and promise, that the rest might be strengthened by him.

Conclude, that thou art not to expect that the whole Church should testifie to thee that it hath received such a Truth from God, which thing is either impossible, or very hard; but if the Seat of *Peter* teacheth that it hath received any thing of Christ, delivered to her by his hands, do thou captive thy understanding, and doubt not at all, but that Jesus Christ spoke it: dispute nothing, nor doubt any thing; although

thy fortunes, although thy body,
and thy life were to be delivered up
for it.

4. Meditation.

Of Gods goodness.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that God is goodness it self, that is to say, a collection of all Goods which can be desired, or wherein we can possibly delight. For certain it is, that whatsoever is good cannot be estranged from goodness : as also, nothing that is not good can possibly be found in goodness it self.

2. That he is an infinite one, since nothing that is not good can be in it, by which it might receive a bound or limitation. A greater good therefore, then which can be either loved, or desired by us as it deserves to be : And that the possession, and fruition of this God, is promised to us by himself ; and
un-

unless we fail our selves, shall be perfected by him.

Conclude therefore, with what vehemency of affection, what love, what fervour, we ought to be transported towards him. How we ought to esteem nothing, in comparison of him. How we ought to think of nothing else, endeavour nothing else, but that we may arrive at this good: to pursue that with all our soul, with all our strength: and when we shall thoroughly perceive our own weakness, and that we desire it nothing in such manner as is fit, how ought we to languish, and to pine away in the pursuit of it?

5. Meditation.

Of Hope.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that since it is the part of goodness to make good, as it is of heat to warm,

and that God is very goodnesse it self; it can in no wise fall out, but that he, wheresoever, and whensoever any good can be done, should will it, with a kind of necessity of his goodnesse; and by how much the greater the good is which is to be performed, with so much the greater inclination, and fervour, be carried unto it, and that by so much the more it should suffice to obtain it, onely not to resist it. Wherefore so that thou covetest the chief good; do but desire it ardently, and make thy self capable of it by not interposing the obstacle of sin, and certainly thou shalt obtain what thou wishest for.

Conclude, that thou wilt extend thy self with thy whole soul, as to a thing certain, and not to be doubted of; for a heart that fluctuates and wavers towards its good, is displeasing to God. Do not be terrified with any difficulty whatsoever, being certain, by how much
grea-

greater the difficulty is, by so much the more shalt thou find God ready to assist thee, against whom nothing can resist: onely love, and be confident; the rest remit unto him, who is as it were compelled with as great an inclination to do thee good, as he himself is his own goodness.

6. Meditation.

Of Charitie.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that we love them by compulsion of Nature, in whom we perceive those vertues, which either our selves have, or which we do wish we had; and the greater those vertues are which reside in those whom we love, and by how much they are more ingrafted in them, so much also is the love greater, and stronger which is procreated in us.

2. See therefore how that what-

soever thou canst desire, the same is to be found in God, in all its kind more noble then in any creature. Dost thou desire knowledge? he is all wisdom. Fortitude? he is all power. Nobility? he is the Fountain and Origine of all being. Pleasure? he is his own; that isto say, the living and perfect fruition of all good. If you desire to know how all these are in him, they are all his very substance, and his substance is his very being, or to be: and as being it self cannot but be; so impossible is it, that God should be destitute of any one of these perfections.

Conclude, with what hearty affection God is to be beloved, and blush at thy self, to see, how him whom once thou didst view behaving himself in a gallant manner; yea, one whom thou didst never see, but onely heardest him playsted, by one to whom thou gavest credit, or of whom thou hast read in History after his death;
nay,

nay, and I may adde also, even such a man whom thou certainly knowest never to have been at all, nor to have done any of those things which thou admirest, some fabulous person, which thou readest of in books, or beholdest onely acted upon a Theatre ; and yet thou so lovest him, as to afford him high affection, praying his deeds, fearing his dangers, rejoycing in his prosperity, and weeping at his misery. But that God, whom thou knowest to be such by reason, and a sure Faith, thou shouldest love so seldome, so coldly, with so great difficulty, and yet notwithstanding, applaud thy self as if thou hadst done well.

7. Meditation.

7. Meditation.

Of Gods Love to Man.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that nothing is more naturall, more reasonable, more due, then that he who loveth, should be beloved again: but to Gods love, whether in affection or effect, that is to say, in the communication of himself, or his goods, there is not any thing comparable.

2. For his affections, they are as great as himself, since whatsoever he applies himself to love, he embraceth it with all himself, and with all the whole necessity of his Essence. His love is also most free in the beginning of his affection, seeing we as then were nothing, nor could it any wayes be thought wherein we could be profitable to him. And in fine, that very love in him, was the vigour, the operation,

Divine Considerations. 61

tion, and the communication of those goods which we possess.

3. Again, it was he who bestowed upon us all good, not one excepted. First of all, he made us his image and likeness: that as he is the very Fountain and universal state of all Being; so we by our understanding, should be a kind of Store-house, & Compendium of all Being too. As he, by his will and good pleasure, absolutely governs all things; so we also should use all externall things for our own profit, the most holy Virgin his Mother not excepted; that the Elements, and their Inhabitants, the Heavens, and the holy Spirits that govern them, should serve us, and that nothing should hurt our souls, in which part we are amiable, but our selves; and our selves ought not, although the whole world, and whatsoever is in it should fall away to nothing.

4. Last of all, he was in no wise sparing of himself; but as the Church sings with Saint *Thomas*,
In

*In birth, he made himself
our dear.*

*Eating, he gave himself for
cheer.*

*In death, himself our Ran-
some is:*

*And reigning he himself's
our blifs.*

5. Adde moreover, that he did not bestow all these things in common, being careless of thee, but he designed them for thee in person, pointing out thee by name. Thee he did know, better then thou dost thy self. Thee he loved; to thee he communicated the riches of his goodness; to thee he made himself servant.

Conclude, that thy spirit ought to fall into an extasie as thou considerest these things, and that the marrow of thy soul, and thy very life should breath it self forth into flames, and violent throbs of love towards him that loveth thee so much.

8. Me-

8. Meditation.

Of Love to our Neighbours.

1. **C**ONSIDER, thy neighbour to be
of the same nature as thy
self, bearing equally the image of
God, alike capable of beatitude, and
of all other goods, & of God equally
beloved; who, howsoever good, or
great, the things be which he posses-
seth, thou art nothing the poorer,
but rather the richer, if he use them
well; who in all likelihood the
less of good he hath, will be so
much the more hurtfull to thee;
who was also bestowed upon thee,
that thou mightest do him good, and
in him worship, and love God, and
seeing thou canst not be profitable
to him in himself, thou mightest in
some manner as it were recompence
his love, and bounty in a member
of his; and by how much the more
thou shalt be carefull to profit him,
by

by so much without all doubt thou shalt profit thy self.

1. Conclude, how many, and how great the obligations are, which thou hast for to love thy neighbour; that thou dost boast in vain of love, if thou dost not love thy neighbour; how absurd a thing it is, to wish a mischief to him whom thou canst not hurt; and how farre more absurd it is, to neglect and abuse the occasion of salvation, and good which is granted to thee; but extremely most absurd it is to hurt thy self, that thou mayest prejudice another.

2. Desire therefore, that thy neighbour may have all that is good, and more heartily, the greater. If he useth some things amisse, yet do not envy him, but wish him more, that by accession of good, he may be thereby taught to use the other better. Above all things strive to render some of Gods benefits to him, and by so doing, draw from him

him greater benefits towards thy self.

9. Meditation.

*Of our duty towards our
Parents.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that thy Parents were given unto thee, that by their means thou shouldst in the first place have all goods of nature, then the gifts of discipline, after this government, when thou wert now able to dispose of thy self, and last of all the goods of Fortune. Since therefore from them it is that thou hast all things that are good, see what thou canst repay them that be considerable.

2. Weigh moreover how that thou art a certain particle of them, cut off naturally from them, and that thy obligation towards them is not grounded in the abstracted consideration of reason, neither can any
wise

wife perish, as having its foundation rooted in thy very substance. Thou art flesh of their flesh, and bone of their bones.

3. Lastly, ponder how deservedly God promiseth long life to such as honour their parents, because they that are ingratefull to those of whom they have received life, do not deserve it: and that Christ our Lord did cast up, and deliver the whole account of his life to be, that he might perform the will of his Father.

Conclude, when as thou art not able to render what is due, thou remainest alwayes obliged to endeavour what thou art able. That neither any injury, nor ill will of thy Parents ought at any time to provoke thee either to negligence, or revenge. But if they are troublesome unto thee, endure it with patience, and thou shalt have a great reward: hold thy self ever ready to execute all good offices towards them.

10. Meditation.

*The duties which we owe
unto our Countrey.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the thing which is called thy Countrey, is a collection of men, which beginning in thy self, by Parents, kindred, and alliance, is derived unto familiars, friends, neighbours, fellow-citizens, and to all such as are contained under the same politicall government. So that the good or bad of them, doth breed to thee, or thine, either thy profit or disprofit. See therefore, that what benefit soever thou hast received from thy Parents, those same, and more, thy countrey hath bestowed upon thee; and whatsoever obligation thou hast to thy parents, thy countrey maketh a greater claim to it. Thou art a part, thy countrey the whole. Thou art a subject, thy countrey superiour.

Adde

2. Adde moreover . that what proportion there is between an infinite and a finite, the same consideration is to be made of a thing in common, in relation to the particular. Therefore the good of the community is esteemed as a divine good, because it is accounted unlimited, both in time and number : but the consideration of thy country unto thee, is as much as of all mankind, since it is but by chance that thou hast communication with any others beside.

3. Gather from hence, the piety, obedience, and reverence which it behoveth thee to bear towards thy countrey: if it be unjust towards thee, endure it ; if it persevereth, forget it, and study nevertheless to render all good for evill : never seek revenge, but if it acteth wickedly, remember it doth not belong to thee to punish it: be not brought about under any pretence to endeavour any thing against it, but endure all with patience, knowing certainly, if it be
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ill with that, it cannot be well with thee: but chiefly ~~confess~~ thy utmost *confess* care that thou mayest be profitable unto it, remembering that Christ our Lord, although he came for the salvation of all mankind, yet he scarce ever passed the bounds of his own countrey, that is to say, the Nation of the Jews.

II. Meditation.

Of Obedience.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that whereas there is no other difference of a Law, and the command of a Superiour, then that the Law proceedeth without passion, and upon serious advisement, but the superiour with a more present efficacy, and less to be contemned; who ever is subject to them, and neglects either the one or other, he is guilty of the breach of the common welfare, for which purpose they were ordained; he contradicts

tradiets himself, since for the most part, the power is approved by them that are to be ruled by it; he violates his own promise, in that he promised to observe them, when he became one subject to them: he effecteth violence to the justice of his Superiour, for if the Superiour hath the right of commanding, he is manifestly unjust who doth not obey him; and a greater injustice it is, then that whereby the right of a private man is infringed. He is obnoxious to Gods judgements, because he hath not done as he commanded, by reason he hath condemned his vice-gerent, because by an usurped priviledge, wherewith he hath exempted himself *de facto* from man, he hath reserved and made himself obnoxious to Gods immediate judgement.

2. Lastly, he ought to give an account for every mischief arising out of his Act, whether it be by a relaxation of government, or by scandall given to others, or by offending

ding Superiours, or by those punishments, which of themselves, or by accident, are derived upon him. Nor doubt, but on the contrary side, as great as these miseries are, so great, nay, far greater are those goods which are reserved for those, that do observe the Laws and precepts of their Superiours.

Conclude, to esteem no law, nor command of thy Superiour, as of light moment; but with thy whole heart, with a ready and chearfull will, embrace and observe even what shall seem hardest to thee.

12. Meditation.

Of Obedience to Superiours.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how it is from thy Governours, and Superiours, that thou dost possess thy own in peace, justice, and commodity proportionable to thy state; that thou canst provide, and be helpfull to thy

thy self, and (if such be thy condition) that being nothing solicitous of food, rayment, or other necessaries, thou attendest onely to what shall be for thy soules and bodies encrease and delight.

2. Consider moreover, that thy Governours are already perfect, not having any need of thee, who also if they would live, and attend onely to themselves, others would provide for them. That they be such, to whom thou canst bring no great good, nor profit, nor do any great mischief. In the mean time, they omitting the care of their own, are solicitous for thee ; for thee they labour, it is thee that they esteem as one of their children, nor have any thing more in their intention, then to make thee better then themselves.

3. Again, consider that they are wise men, of greater age, skills, and experience, and know more what belongs unto their charge then thou dost : and have many helps to find that out, which thou wantest. That
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the rewards of their labours which they expect in this world, are late, and light, nor comparable to their labours; and if they were great, since they proceed not from thee, they do no wayes diminish thy debt. That the account which they are to give unto God, is heavy, since they must not onely answer for themselves, but for thee also, and thy actions. That the punishments are severe which are threatned against those that do ill; and that in this life also, there is not a more perillous action, then the government of men.

Conclude, to have a reverend and gratefull mind alwayes towards them, not to judge of their actions rashly, but to embrace, or at least patiently endure them, as proceeding for the most part out of their love towards thee. Lastly, to endeavour thy self, that thou mayest be such, that they shall have no cause to deal with thee, and govern thee othe wise then with

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love, and good will. If any thing that is sharp, or not so vertuous as should be, proceeds from them, to remember, that to suffer some discomforts, among many profits, is not considerable ; That if they do otherwise then well, we must pardon them as men, but we must be indebted to them for whatsoever is well done, as to friends.

13. Meditation.

*Of Liberalitie and
Gratitude.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that it is a greater happiness (as our Lord himself witnesseth) to give, then to receive : therefore it is the part of a noble mind, if it be compelled through the necessity of humane condition to receive any thing of another, to be carefull to restore it perfectly back again ; but if he cannot, yet to acknowledge it in-
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genuously, and to publish it abroad.

2. Gratitude also for a benefit received, doth intice and draw forth a second, if the benefactor bears a noble heart; but with him that is base, it satisfies, and stifles clamorous complaints.

3. Again, there is not a reproach more odious, then that of a benefit received with ingratitude; from whence it proceeds, that according to the imperiall constitution, a curtesie done might be revoked, if ingratitude were proved.

4. Moreover, God among other causes by which goods are to be acquired, hath placed the prayers of the poor, that, as it were out of the nature of the thing, he would blesse those, for whose prosperity the poor make supplication to him. Therefore he that receives a benefit with obligation, or hopes of prayers to be offered for the benefactor, is absolutely bound to pray for him; and if he doth it not, the mischiefs which shall happen to the

benefactour will be imputed to him.

Conclude, gifts are prudently to be asked, and accepted, to wit, when necessity compelleth thee; when they are received, they are to be acknowledged and commended; and if there be any thing wherein thou canst profit thy benefactour, it is to be done with diligence. This is the condition of benefits, that if thou hast done any, thou shouldest esteem them as little: but if thou hast received them, esteem them as great. Last of all, when you can return nothing else, endeavour in your prayers to God to obtain all good for those that have conferred any benefit upon you, do it fervently, and earnestly; and in the first place take care thy prayers may be such, as shall be to God acceptable.

14. Meditation.

Of Rash Judgement.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how a judgement is called rash, when without sufficient ground thou condemnest another of a crime: which to do, first of all is unjust, as well because thou dost occasion a prejudiciall conceit, and hurtest the fame of thy neighbour in thy self; as also, that by reason of such judgement, thou art ready to treat him as a guilty person, if occasion offered it self.

2. It is also an act of imprudence, because it determines of a thing that is hid, without any sufficient argument; and a token of a corrupt affection concerning the same crime: for men who are innocent, esteem others as harmless also; but those that are guilty, think all men like themselves.

3. It is also more often false, then true; for it is a thing manifest, that the seeds of vertue are so fixed in mans nature, that for the most part they cannot be rooted forth. Whence it was, that whenas *Elias* thought himself alone, there were seven thousand besides. So in *Ninive* also, there were 100000. of innocent persons. Nay, for the most part all men, in a cause that importeth not their own interests, do embrace vertue.

4. Lastly, whosoever it is that sins, he is the bondman of God, and it belongs not to us to judge of him, but unto God; and therefore whenas we judge another mans slave, we make our selves obnoxious to Gods judgements.

Conclude, to suspend thy judgement in a matter that is uncertain, and to ite me to think the best of every one. For everyone is presumed to be good, untill the contrary be manifest: although because thou knowest not whether he be good

or

or bad, to expose thy self that he may do thee a mischief, be no part of wisdom; but for every thing else to be ready to do good, to hear, and to speak well of him.

15. Meditation.

Of Detraction.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the Fame of Man, among all the goods of Fortune, if it be not better than the good of Fortune, is a thing most precious, and highly to be esteemed: And therefore that the injury of him who taketh it away, is more grievous than that of him who shall take away money.

2. Besides the damage is in a manner irreparable, as well, because it is hard to a man for to contradict himself; as also, because the speech is scattered among those whom thou knowest not, canst not bring together again, nor

will believe thee although thou canst thy own saying.

3. Moreover, that whether thou speak without any intention of hurting, it is a manifestation of a corrupt and wicked soul, to be delighted in the commemoration of anothers sin; or that thou thinkest the fame of thy neighbour to be any obstacle to thee, it is the part of a base and narrow mind, to desire to grow up more by another mans fault, then by thy own virtues.

4. Adde to these, how many persons thou drawest along with thee, to be companions in the mischief: because men for the most part do willingly discourse of other mens faults, and scatter them abroad among themselves.

5. Nor think thy self excusable, if thou detract from any without any passion, or sign of passion, but as it were out of commiseration; for the malice is so much the more grievous, and it behoved thee

thee to have taken so much the more heed, in as much as thou wast less subject to passion.

Conclude, to keep a door of circumstance before thy lips, and to speak nothing of another without mature deliberation; since that every word drawes after it a long train of sins. Hate therefore all detraction, and be not delighted with the commiseration of detractors, which is to no avail.

16. Meditation.

Of Slanderers.

1 **C**ONSIDER, peace, and friendship to be certain publick goods, because the nature of them is to extend not to one alone, but to many. Adde, that there is no fruit more pleasant in mans life, then that of friendship, and that without peace, man enjoys nothing of his own in quiet, nor doth any
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thing of that which he possesseth yield him profit.

2. Again, consider, that discord arising out of light beginnings, encreaseeth without measure: for when as once an ill impression is made upon one or both parties, all the others actions, though done with a good intention, are taken in the worse part, and are themselves corrupted. To this may be added, that he who soweth discord createth mischief for himself, and his friends, who had a good opinion of him; for had they not been his friends they would not have afforded any credit to him concerning that other who should have been a friend.

Conclude, how deservedly a detracting whisperer, and his charming noise is detestable to God and man, being an enemy of the divine Grace, and Nature it self. Stop thy ears to those who speak ill of any one, but chiefly of thy friends. Specially if thou hast any thing against

gainst thy friend, carefully seek the means, that without offence thou mayest reveal it to him ; and thereby know what he is able to say in defence of himself : and if thou findest any calumny imposed upon him, ever afterwards beware of him, who wittingly and willingly created it. Shun both him and his discourses, give no ear unto him, because thou mayest be certain most hainous mischiefs by his means do hang over thee.

Of

*Of Vertues in relation
to ones self.*

17. Meditation.

Of good Works.

1. **C**ONSIDER, as it is the nature of heat to warme, so is it of good to do good; wherefore by how much the more any one partakes of it, so much the more accidentally is it necessary he should be moved to act accordingly.

2. Again, consider, that profit is not to be looked after in doing good: for if a brute beast perfects his actions agreeable to his nature, and that the soul it self doth perform the delightfull operations of the senses, without any further end; how unworthy a thing is it, that he same should not have
a will

a will to follow those operations which are proper to her self, without regard of profit?

3. Adde, that by how much a reasonable soul is more noble then that of beasts, by how much more efficacious, by how much more universall; by so much her appetite and delight ought to be more vehement in goods that are connaturall to her self, then in those that appertain to sense.

4. Besides, the life of him is most sweet, and exceeding pleasant; not alone for the goodness it self of vertue; but also in that it maketh the praises, and congratulations of those that receive the benefit to be perpetuall, that their aspects and countenances are sweet, and cheerfull, their vowes, of happiness; the encountering of men is on every side gracious; no sadness, nor repentance for anything committed; besides other infinite pleasures.

5. At last, it is the most ready
way

way to honour, power, and wealth: because all desire he should be exalted, from whom they expect both justice, and goodnets; every man willingly treats and deals with him; every man embraceth him heartily and freely, as faithfull in all occasions; every man in his affairs puts confidence in him.

Conclude, that thy perpetuall study ought to be to do good to thy neighbour, especially to such as are in necessity: and blush to think how a Prince believed he had lost that day, wherein he had not bestowed some Act of Grace; whereas thou art still seeking out of thy bounty some advance of profit for thy self, neither art moved with the example of God himself.

18. Meditation.

Of Government.

1. Consider, how Offices were ordained by the institution both of God and Man for the common good, and therefore a greater Charity is required of those that are to be advanced to Offices, then of other private men; Christ our Lord signifying this, when he said to *Peter*, *Dost thou love me more then these?*

2. Again, consider, it is a work more then humane to govern men; whereupon Princes are intituled with the Title of Gods. Moreover, since it is the propertie of wisdom to dispose in order, to arrange and keep in order wise men, is an affair of the highest, and mastering wisdom, and a work approaching to God. And therefore ample honours and rewards

wards in the sight of God and men, are due, and to be given unto those that are placed in government, to every one in his order.

3. Again, they are obliged, who are set in Office, to give an account for all that evil, which through their negligence, shall chance to those who are under their government and charge, their labours are to be more heavy, and more continuall, then other mens whatsoever. So that when there is any need, they ought with their examples to tread out the path, where in their subjects should follow, in whatsoever laborious, or contemptible exercise. Their faults also in themselves are more grievous, and more exposed to view, nor can they by any means ly hid.

4. Besides these, the fault which in them appears but as light, draws after it a chain of many and mighty mischiefs. And lastly, the punishment, and dishonour of those, who carry themselves negligently,
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are intolerable, and of all most horrible.

Conclude, that an Office is a thing worthy, and to be wished for, but not to be demanded; since thou knowest not how thou shalt manage thy self in it. Nor yet is it to be refused, when God, according to the judgement of those whom it concerneth, shall impose it upon thee; because it is a great good; nor mayest thou doubt of Gods assistance, nor refuse it without sin, when he shall be pleased to call thee up to it. If thou art set in Office, tremble to think with what love and care thou must labour for thy self, and others, and what miseries pursue sloath. Stir thy self therefore up, and go on, and never rest secure.

19. Meditation.

Of Scandall.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that it is necessary for them who profess a special charge and love of souls, not onely to abstain from those things which are evill, but from those also which carry any shew of it; for he that doeth any such thing, with desire of a temporall commodity, induceth his neighbour who is not sufficiently able to judge, to imitate what is bad, or blaspheme his good.

2. In the first place therefore, he woundeth his soul, diminisheth Gods honour, diverts men from his service, defileth his own reputation, and that of others, who are of like profession, he hinders the profit that should proceed from their Ministry; and all these are cast behinde, for the pursuance of
some

some base gain, or despicable pleasure.

3. Adde, that the thing which he doth, for the most part is not without sin: for whereas humane actions ought to be estimated not according to the principles of Metaphysicks, but by the morall judgement of a prudent man; not every thing which to a subtile discourse, but which is congruous to humane conversation, is approved just and right.

4. Besides the damage for the most part of our neighbour, and a disturbance of the Common-weale, which happen out of the bordering vice, do also ordinarily proceed from such like actions. Wherefore the end for which sin is prohibited is found in them, and therefore it is hard to finde how they should be innocent, and free from all vice.

Conclude, that thou must live plainly and uprightly, and that thou wilt avoid not onely such things

things as of themselves are naught, but also those which carry a face of badness; and that thou wilt not let's beware of those things which are generally esteemed wicked, then of those which are truly so indeed.

20. Meditation.

Of Rashness.

1. **C**ONSIDER him who desireth any thing, how he is troubled, and in affliction, untill he injoyeth what he desireth: besides, he is disquieted, full of cares, and burthensome to himself, and others, whiles he is finding out the means how to compass what his unbridled concupiscence proposeth unto him; and for the most part to be ignorant, and to over-value the thing that he desireth; and when he hath it, to esteem it nothing, as taught by experience, that there was nothing

thing to be desired in it : but in the interim he is tormented with a large measure of solicitude, labour and pain. But the greatest folly is, that he placeth his affection in that, which resteth in the power of another man, unto which either he can by no means come, or otherwise it must be obtained with loss and painfull displeasures.

2. Lastly, when as the peace of mans life consisteth in the enjoyment of all that which he desireth, but this can onely chance two manner of wayes; either by being secure to obtain whatsoever thou desirest, or by desiring nothing, nor other way then is in thy power to obtain ; since the first way is impossible, and the other track is in thy own power, it is manifest, the totall felicity of humane life is constituted in a moderate appetite.

Conclude, to watch carefully over thy soul by inclining thy affections to the best, and withdrawing them from opinionative impressions

pressions and motions, knowing that good and evill is placed in thy self, and whether thou shalt live a happy or a miserable life.

21. Meditation.

Of Martyrdome.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how that among all things that are terrible, the most terrible thing is Death, and unto which the other miseries of our life are onely steps. What great fortitude therefore is it, to make a change of life which is most pleasant, into death to be suffered by torments? and this not in the fury of war, nor the transporting ardor of a passion, nor through inevitable necessity; but with a quiet minde, with a constant deliberation, life being offered, all those that are nearest perswading to the preservation of it, when it would be an honour, and profitable to retain

tain it, and that it would be thought wisely done.

2. How great a gain is that act of Faith, whenas all thy senses denounce infallibly, that they, and all those things which they delight in, are come now to their period; that Countrey, Parents, Friends, Honours, Pleasures, Wealth, Power, and whatsoever else, to which thou hast been accustomed, shall from henceforth be-sted thee nothing; and again, of what is to come they cannot speak, or promise any thing: yet relying upon the promise of such things as appear not at all, to be nothing afraid to forsake, and cut off those things wherewith thou art acquainted, together all, in one moment?

3. What great charity is it, in the twinckling of an eye, to cast away all these dear and cordiall delights, whereof thou art or couldst be possessed, and all thy hopes of the same, and thy self especially, for whom all the rest of those amiable

amiable things are ordained, and from whence they do assume the reason of being amiable, for the love of him whom thou hast never seen, nor heard of by any, that could say they saw him?

4. Lastly, how high an act, and of how great Religion is it, to offer up thy self, and all that is thine in one holocaust to God, for a testimony to Kings, that he is God, whose commandments are to be observed, the commands of men being contemned when ever they are contrary to them? What a heap also of high honour is yielded up unto God, and what kind of conceit will Nations frame of him, when they shall perceive his servants to halten to all the greatest miseries in the world, rather then transgress the least of his Commandements?

Conclude, with what honour they are to be revered, with what admiration they are to be worshipped, that do these things:
and

and with what fervour thou art to labour that thou mayest be found worthy of so great an honour.

22. Meditation.

Of Perseverance.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the misery which perseverance endureth cannot be grievous, for what is grievous is short: how shamefull is it therefore, and reproachfull, to be overcome onely as it were by continuance of time, and importunitie of matters of little moment?

2. Besides that, the inconstant man condemneth himself, either for that he inconsiderately did begin, or that he now without just cause doth leave off: both of them the part of an unwise man, and who is not master of his own actions. Moreover, he is scorned by all men, nor hath any one any good esteem

of the event of what he undertaketh.

3. Adde to these, that for the most part he loseth the reward of the labours which he hath past, which were greater then these to come, because the greatest difficultie is in the beginning; as also great hopes, and near at hand, for light ensuing difficulties.

4. Again consider, that nature her self, and whatsoever doeth well, acteth better by perseverance then force; and that those things more thoroughly penetrate the soul, or any other externall matter, which are imprinted sweetly, and by custome, then those that are applied by a sudden change: for that alwayes which is violent is corruptive, and contrary to nature.

5. Lastly, weigh, how that all and every opposition against which perseverance resisteth, are but light, nor can come upon thee but one at one time; from whence it proceeds, that unlesse thy minde be troublesome
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in the thoughts, and remembrance, in the things themselves there is nothing that deserveth either flight or fear.

Conclude, not to change that good which thou hast timely undertaken; for not the beginnings, but the end of the Action is crowned. Not to fear difficulties, before they set upon thee, and thou shalt find them much lighter: for they terrifie more in the amusement of our fancies, then when they are present. Cast thy thought upon our Lord, and fearing nothing, proceed with constancy and alacrity. Goe on, and do something dayly, and take care onely for that which this day is to be done, and taken care for.

23. Meditation.

*Of the Observation of Order
and Discipline.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that those things which are constituted of number, whatsoever it be, and whether it be found to proceed from God, or men, the form and essence of them all is order. From whence it comes to passe, that he that toucheth but one link of order, shaketh the whole chain of the body. Now the order of a Community is the observance of the Rules and Ordinances.

2. Again, other goods, as those of Vertue, Science, and the rest, are in themselves but particular goods, and of their own nature to be effected in singular persons, and but by accident in more; onely Order of it self is the good of the whole Community. Besides, whatsoever

is in the Community, it, either altogether, or as far at least as it is common, proceedeth from order, or by means of that it is perfected.

3. Adde to these, how a little error encreaseth in any good by reason of the Community. Dost thou lose one quarter of an houre? in a Community it is so many houres, as there are four Persons numbred in it. Dost thou take away one dish of a halspeny? it increaseth suddenly unto pounds. What should I but adde, how a Community is for the most part neither of a certain number, nor a limited time? Into what an infinite mischief therefore doth a little, and an error in the beginning as it were contemptible, spring forth on a sudden, if the least liberty or oppression be brought in?

4. Then weigh, if any one either by example, or other occasion doth hurt to a Community, of how great a discommodity is he bound to the restitution, when as out of justice,

the superiour is obliged to command order to be kept, and the inferiour is bound to observe it: for Order of it self is the proper object of publick justice, and who concurrerth to the fact, is obliged to the whole damage.

Conclude, if thou art a superiour, to take care that Order be observed with all rigour; and if thou art inferiour, to be watchfull, as far as it lies upon thy part, that discipline be not neglected: if a mitigation be at any time to be made, to use it so, that it passe not either for an example, or scandall to discipline, and but rarely to think the same necessary, and to admit it with great wariness, and to put more confidence in the judgement of thy superiour, then in thy own, and at all times to fear thy own inconstancy.

24. Meditation.

Of Courage and Constancie.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the rewards of the life to come are such, that they cannot be compared either with the joyes, or miseries of this life; for they do exceed, as an infinite exceeds a finite, as intellectuall things do sensuall, as spirituall do corporall, and as eternall are preferred before momentary. Adde moreover, that the present labours are seasoned with many comforts, with the peace and joy of a good conscience, with the success it self, with the glory of a great fortitude, with comforts sent down from God, with the favour of men, and their ready assistance, and the confusion of our adversaries.

2. Again, if thou reflect thy eyes upon the life of the rest of men, how much more intolerable labours shall

you see undertaken for lighter rewards? Look but upon Souldiers, Saylors, such as labour in the Mines, or the life of Slaves, how it is passed over without ease, or comfort of body, or of soul, or the hope of vain-glory, or a little coin.

3. Yea also, contemplate those miseries which are to be endured, if thou seekest to avoid the labours of Vertue: What passions, brawls, envy, ill will, detractions, dangers: so that thou shalt be troublesome, and burdensome to thy self. But what follows the period of this short life, who is able to express?

Conclude, to harden thy face to the undertaking of labours, seeing how foolish a thing it is for the fear of a little pains, or present difficulty, to ingulf thy self into these unspeakable & intolerable miseries. Know that labour is naturall, and will be made delightfull by custome. Shake off therefore thy drowsiness, and remember thy self to be a man, a comparer of what
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is past with what is to come ; neither doubt of the victory, if you dare but undertake the battell.

25. Meditation.

Of Passionate Desires.

1 **C**ONSIDER, that it is settled in us by nature, to will and desire to do all things according to reason ; so that not the least childe can endure it to be said that he acts in passion ; but by how much a man is more pressed with passion, by so much the less will he suffer himself to be perswaded that he is so. But when we perceive another man doing any thing in passion, we slight him, and laugh him to scorn.

2. Moreover, passions do drive us contrary wayes, and leade us along in an uncertain, and giddy course of life, and precipitate us headlong into vast mischiefs, through inconsideration of circumstances, and

the effects which it brings along with it. Of it self it is painfull, in effects it is worse. Passion discovered makes its master obnoxious and easie to be played upon by the man that is wise, who having searched out his humours by the proposition of those objects which in passion he coveteth, or hateth, drives him along, how, and which way he pleaseth. Lastly, Passion is no other thing then a portion of folly.

3. Adde the mischiefs of the sin into which it drives us, the loss of spirituall goods, and the falling into the punishments which are known by revelation.

Conclude, with all thy strength, and thy whole endeavour, to watch, that thou mayest understand unto what passions and desires thou art subject ; that thou mayest reprove and repress at the first their force and motions ; that incessantly thou mayest fear, and search all thy works with Lanthorns, before thou doest them, and whiles thou art doing them :

them: being sure, that so far as thou shalt profit in this exercise, so far thou mayest be secure of thy actions, and of a life without blame.

26. Meditation.

*Of humble submission
to the Divine
Providence.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that whereas God is good, and constituted the Universe of good things, it is consequent that all things good are knit together, and do mutually usher in one the other, and have their causes certain, and rightly ordered. But evils do fall in, as it were by accident, without any determinate causes, and without order. Therefore is it necessary, that to whatsoever good, although temporall, as honours, power, riches, pleasure, the passage must be more efficacious, and secure by Vertue, then by Vices; but
unto

unto evill, the tract is full of thorns, and there is no constant methode: neither to temporall goods, can any high-way be made by doing ill.

2. Adde, whereas those things are onely properly our deeds, which one designs to do by knowledge, foresight, and resolution; and that the meanest action of a man cannot be totally ordered by him, because no man hath any perfect knowledge in every circumstance concurring to the action, as it is manifest to him that considers it: we must therefore depend upon God in all, and every act, and circumstance. And therefore how foolish is it to think to govern kingdoms, and to bring unto perfection great affairs, without the Patronage of God, or contrary to his pleasure?

Conclude, not to be confident of any action, before thou dost see it finished, and brought to perfection; because there are many things in it whereof thou never didst consider: nor yet to glory in it when it is done;
for

for all that which is thy share in it had never brought it to perfection. Neither must thou presume of any vertue whatsoever, or grow insolent over others, because those are not sufficient to do the work which are the end of them : from whence it comes to passe, that we perceive the actions of the weakest counsell reach oftentimes, and attain the conclusion, when those, that are most cunningly proposed, do fail of the purpose. Nor must we run astray, to obtain any effect by sin ; nor believe that any mischief can be atchieved by force of wit. Neither must thou be exceedingly solicitous of such things as are far off, nor hinder another mans good, although a far off thou conceivest he may be prejudiciall unto thee.

27. Meditation.

Of Prayer.

1. **C**onsider, that whereas the soul hath two movers, the sense and the understanding; whereof the sense is ever open, and moved by her objects, and by frequent strokes draws the understanding to her opinions, and the will to her affections: it is clear, that except the understanding draws away her self by Meditation to the contrary verities, and the will by prayer to pious and right affections, from sensitive impressions; it cannot be avoided, but that becoming carnall, and worldly, we should be quite estranged from the true goods of the soul.

2. Again, seeing God, through the necessity of his goodnesse, affects nothing more then to communicate his gifts, and we are not otherwise capable of them, but by
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our understanding, and will, rightly disposed ; which is done by Meditation and Prayer ; and that by them we are capable of all good whatsoever : know certainly that there is nothing in Gods Treasure, which by force of Prayer may not be drawn forth and applied to thee.

3. Lastly, since Meditation and Prayer is nothing else but an illumination of the understanding concerning the most eminent and clear verities and most of all necessary ; and a fitting of the will to the greatest goods, most of all to be desired, and exceeding naturall ; it followeth , that nothing can be found more sweet, nothing more delightfull, nor any thing to which thou mayest more constantly adhere then to these two.

Conclude, the exercise of Prayer ought to be dayly, most diligent, most necessary ; to be esteemed, and practised as a thing more excellent then any other businesse. But that thou oughtest to esteem for Prayer,
all

all that which hath the fruit of Prayer, to wit, the ascertaining of the understanding, and the preparation of the will in things concerning thy salvation.

28. Meditation.

Of Humilitie, and Reverence to God.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how thy soul by the benefit of Sciences, gathers into her self the whole stock of being, by infinite chains of an infinite number of consequences: and how those things which are contrary in themselves, are not onely in the soul together, but also agreeing, so that one thing cannot be separated from another.

2. Weigh therefore, if that there should meet together in a center, into one entity, not by collection of parts, but simplicity of substance, all that, not onely of this Universe, whereof

Divine Considerations. 113

whereof so little is comprehended by us, but whatsoever possibility, and fruitfulness of being is poured forth, through spaces not to be imagined by us, of Eternity, Immensity, and sublimity, by an indissoluble verity of essences, so that also every one should remain singular, and indivisible notwithstanding, in the simplicity of the highest formality; weigh, I say if thou canst, of what sort, how noble, and high, that being should be, how by an originall necessity of being, it is the principle and fountain of all, how it is a superabundant stock of fullness of good, & the end by the participation & for the injoying whereof all things subsist. And when thou canst ascend no further, call him God.

3. Adde, that he is the All of all things, that thou and thine proceed from him, are sustained by him, and preserved from falling into nothing.

Conclude, with what amazement, with what terrour thou oughtest to be taken and stricken with the view
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of his greatness, and the lightning of his glory : with what profound humility , abjection, and plunging of thy self into the abyss of thy own nothing , it becometh thee to present thy self before his divine eyes : thou, an invisible Atome dropt from his works , who themselves, as great as they are, seem infinitely less than nothing, being compared to their Creatour.

2. How much is it fit thou shouldst not endure that any thing should be compared with him, or be vouchsafed any honour at all when he is mentioned? And with what immense gratitude art thou bound to restore, and offer up thy self, and thine, which were originally his, and belonging to his service more justly, then any slave to his lord, or he that hath received a benefit, to his benefactor? And value in the first place, that he vouchsafeth to receive thy self of thy self.

29. Meditation.

*Of heedfull Attention to Gods
Inspirations.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that whereas God
acteth all things which he
doeth by his knowledge, and his
will; and that every thing, with all
its parts and powers, was made by
him: it is consequent, that he knows
them all, and perfectly comprehen-
deth the effects of them in them-
selves.

2. Lastly, whatsoever is done
through the whole Universe, he hath,
as it were, the History of it written
in the Tables of his own Eternity,
that not the least dust can be divi-
ded, not one sand grow together,
not a drop of water, not a leaf of a
tree can fall without his will and
knowledge: whatsoever he willet
is most efficaciously performed, and
wheresoever he willet, there
most

most infallibly it faileth.

1. Conclude, not to be scandalized, or sad, for whatsoever shall come to pass, besides thy own sins; being certain, that since it proceeds according to the counsell of him that is all wisdom, tempered with perfect goodnesse, it cannot, all things considered, but be best of all, that it should so come to pass.

2. Again, never go about a long time before to consult and be solicitous concerning thy future life and actions: since every plot of thine is uncertain, and doubtfull, whether it will be for good or bad, since thou dost not thoroughly foresee even what is before thy eyes.

3. Attend to God alone, that thou maist do thy duty in whatsoever he commands or counsells thee: but think that he commands that, which now not to be done is wicked; & to counsell that, which according to thy present knowledge, and power, seems to thee fit to be done, without any passion, or corrupt affection.

Divine Considerations. 117

fection. Neither be thou afterwards solicitous, whether it succeeds or not, being secure, that wisely, according to thy Conscience, thou didst undertake it, and as it was fitting for thee: but alwayes stand vigilant, and full of regard in the sight of him that doth see thee, and thine; whether outwardly by any opportunity, or inwardly by any inspiration he offer thee any thing, that thou mayest not omit it; and more especially, that thou mayest not attempt that thing which might displease him.

30. Meditation.

*Of the Reverence due
to Saints.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that those blessed Spirits which enjoy God, are the friends of God, seeing his face, and talking with him, as one friend is wont to discourse with another, knowing all the reasons of his Providence, partakers of all the secrets of the wisdom of God, as to whom he hath revealed all that he hath heard from his Father.

2. Again, consider that they are the most perfect and noble among creatures; the treasures of wisdom and science; having the fullness of Sanctity, and Goodness naturally, in a manner, rooted within them; elevated above their nature, and the excellency of any possible creature; they are deiform, full of God himself, and unchangeable

able by an unspeakable participation of his Eternity.

3. Moreover, they are established in grace, and as it were in like power, by God : for as he would communicate to us the goods and benefits of Nature by naturall causes, for the manifestation of his bounty ; so he made choice of these, to communicate and bestow morall goods at their intercession. So much more mighty then upon the earth, by how much more they do superabound in Charity.

4. Consider them lastly to be such, as have endured a hard combat before they attained Glory : those that have remained in temptations with Christ, for whom the vast compasse of the World was made, and ages have run their race.

Conclude, they are to be honoured according to the state of their eminency, and dignity : that they are to be revered, and prayed unto, according to the power and

and grace which they have with God: that they are to be imitated in their vertue, and abiding of battels, for which they were given to be examples to thee. If thou inquirest how much; more then wise men, more then those that are powerfull, or princes, more then thou canst do, or invent; because their dignity is more then that thou canst sufficiently admire.

31. Meditation.

*Of Devotion to our B.
Ladie.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the blessed Virgin was so farre a cause, that God should be Man, as our Mothers are that we should be living, and mortall: And that Jesus did owe unto his Mother, as he was Man, as much in proportion for that benefit, as we do to ours, in that we have a being from them. O wonderfull and inexplicable greatness!

2. Again,

2. Again, it was granted to her by God, that out of her purest bloud, she should give matter, and nourishment unto Christ; that she should take care of him in his infancy. Nay, moreover, she received power over him, as well for correction, as direction: for this is a mothers power, and she was truly a mother.

3. Adde that, although a mother after her son is come to the age of freedome, and emancipation, ceaseth to be greater then her son by right, and in princes is absolutely subject: notwithstanding, the authority, and reverence, and power, which she hath by grace, and good will, in a good child remains nothing lesse then it was formerly, as long as she behaves her self wisely.

4. Out of which Considerations behold, as fervently as thou canst, the unspeakable dignity, and power of the mother of God. And adde, whereas God distributeth his gifts

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according to the quality of those that receive them, and that the quality of his mother was without comparison, or measure; he must have powred upon her the fulnesse of dignity, power, grace, and eminency, not in a higher degree of the same nature, but in a manner more noble, and large, by the whole kind and nature of it.

Conclude, that thy reverence and devotion, though it ought to be in a more high degree unto the rest of the Saints, then towards any other creatures in what power forever they are seated; yet must it be notwithstanding particular: whenas to the most blessed Virgin, there is due a devotion perpetuall, universall, continuall, in such manner inferiour to the worship of God, as that it must not yet be separated, but as it were concomitant, or accompanying it, and in a sort lesse in the essence alone, in the circumstances almost equall, as due to her, who by grace and favour reigneth with him.

32. Meditation.

*Of the daily Sacrifice of the
Catholick Church.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that whereas a sacrifice is the consumption of some creature, without our own profit, for a testimony that we acknowledge God to be the fountain of all being, and from whom are both our selves, and all that is ours ; that he is the end, for whom all things are, and to whom we direct our selves, and what is ours ; that he is Lord of life, and death, of bodies, and of souls, and according to whose will, all things are, or are not : it therefore ought only to be offered unto God, and by consequence is the principall act of religion and sanctity, which we can possibly set forth.

2. **A**dde moreover, that it is a gift, by the oblation whereof our prayers

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are rendred more acceptable unto God, and more efficacious; whether it be, that our soul is more lifted up when we bestow any thing, or that it requireth a proportion of humane prayer.

3. But the Christian sacrifice is the most noble, the life of the man God being the offering, in comparison of which, the whole world is nothing, full of infinite mysteries, and beyond understanding: as that the host sacrificed should not remain dead; that a quantitative body, whole, with its figure, should exist in every particle of an alien quantity; that a substance should be presented under other likenesses, and that they should subsist in it after a manner impossible to be uttered.

4. To conclude, this sacrifice is not of the Priests alone, but of every one in the Catholick Church, who, except they be carelesse, may offer it up by the hands of the Priest, for themselves and theirs, as much as he himself can do it, yea, although
he

he should be unwilling to it.

Conclude, what a rashness, negligence, slothfulness, nay, and infidelity it is, to be present at an act the only most religious, and most holy, the most mysterious, and the greatest of all others, lastly, wherein in a manner the whole substance of advantage in a Christian life doth consist, without attention, or affection; either for custome, or by command; and in the mean time to have the mind absent, and wandering in other thoughts.

33. Meditation.

*The frailty of the
Body.*

1. **C**ONSIDER thy body, how it consists of an element which is heavy, burthensome, and unprofitable, depressing thy soul, and hindring thy actions, abounding with numberlesse excrements, which are not only troublesome, but also filthy, and to be cast out of sight.

2. As many members as thou hast, so many are the seats of severall diseases, occasions of thy sufferings, and springs of thy griefs. Read but the books of Physitians, and it will prove a miracle in a manner, that in so great a multitude, and such an easie accesle of sufferings, any one should be possibly free. Moreover, how great is the grief and torment of them, how tedious are they to thy self, and to such as live with thee,

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we can hardly attain to speak it,
no nor to think it.

3. Again consider, what a needy creature thou art: look upon thy garments, how many trades have there been imployed in making them up? from how many creatures, herbs, elements, and countries have they been fetched? are those any thing fewer that are gathered together for thy food? Then for medicines? as also for the building, and furniture of thy house? If any part of the world were wanting, thou wouldst be destitute of some of these: so that the whole world is necessary, and conspires together for the relief of thy person.

4. Moreover, the vertues of the body, how little praise deserve they? Beauty serves but for other mens eyes, thou receivest no fruit thereof. Besides, of what great frailty is it? obnoxious to age, diseases, casualties; nothing more of substance, then a shadow, or a dyed light, that in what it resides it would

be a labour to find out.

5. The strength of a beast, unto thee, whose honour it is with wit to subdue the strongest things, will turn neither to vertue nor to profit, since thou must give place to the vigorous force of a little engine or vise, to an horse, oxe, or the like creature. As for nimblenesse, it is but a toy, and a commendation of vagabonds, who expose their bodies to sale for other mens pleasure: and for what else serveth it for the most part, more then to make thy self servile, and a game for others to look upon, being compared to a Monkey, or some little bird?

Conclude, it is unworthy a man to glory in the body, or esteem it of any value.

34. Meditation.

Of the miseries of the Soul.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how thy soul may be rather said to be admitted to the sight, then the participation of what is good unto her: how miserable & unhappy is she, how subject to all the maladies of the body? If the body grieves, if it rejoyceth, if it be hot, or cold, if it suffers any the least discommodity; the soul doth not only suffer with it, but is also tedious to herself, and struggleth along, being intangled, and unprofitable in the performance of her own actions.

2. Moreover, with how many passions is she vexed, and in a manner rent into pieces, when as the itching desire of pleasure allures one way, the swelling ambition of honour inticeth the contrary, the hope of gaining wealth perswades another,

envy a fourth? Thus passion oppres-
seth her, when through rashnesse
she thinks not of it, and afflicteth
her also, when she doth think of it,
and hurries her away from the very
thought. Hence it is that she feign-
eth matters most easy, to be impossi-
ble, and things impossible, to be most
easy, and carrieth and scattereth
miserable man among precipices,
and rocky passages.

2. But that which is the accom-
plishment of misery is this, that the
whole universe of creatures sufficeth
not to exalt her to the beatitude she
is born to: and when as all other
things enjoy for the most part their
end, & not any considerable part are
deprived of it; the greatest part of
man alone is intangled and wrap-
ped up in miserable punishments,
and torments, which cannot be
comprehended by thought, and a
few of the remainders only are sa-
ved: whereas notwithstanding, be-
yond the contributed service of all
the bulk of corporeall creatures,
and

and the Celestiall Hierarchy ; God employed himself for almost four and thirty years together, and by a death most cruell, by Sacraments of a stupendious efficacy, and in the chief place, by an eternall presence of himself in the chief of them, made himself the minister and instrument to help and bring him to salvation.

4. Now as for the excellencies of the soul, what are they? For science, thou hast none ; or so little, that by how much the more thou knowest, so much the more is thy grief, by knowing better the multitude of those things whereof thou art ignorant, which are infinite in respect of those whereunto thy knowledge is arrived ; nor is there any one work of God, no not the least dusty atome, whereof thou canst attain to a perfect knowledge.

5. As for thy vertue, thou canst never be secure ; in every moment thou art ready to be proud of it, and loose it : and for the snares of the
Devil,

Devil, they are infinite, and past finding out, by means of which they would snatch it from thee every moment, but only that God restrains him beyond thy strength.

Conclude therefore, not to wax insolent, but to bewail thy misery; since it is truly such, as thou canst never acknowledge, or bewail it sufficiently enough.

35. Meditation.

Of the knowledge of ones self.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how unworthy a thing it is, when of thy self thou art worth nothing, therefore to value thy self because thou thinkest another hath less. And then, wherein is it that thou excellest another? In beauty? Thou canst not enjoy that which thou canst not behold. In strength or nimbleness? It is the commendation of beasts. And
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how fraile also are these things, which chance, or a disease will take from thee? neither canst thou be sure of it to morrow: which being also anothers gift, is not to be attributed to thy praise, but to his that bestowed it.

2. But they are the dowries of the mind wherein thou art excellent: thou art a Philosopher, a Divine, thou teachest great matters. I pray God thou doest, and not cracking things uncertain for certain, being deceived thy self, deceivest thy Scholars, acting the part of a blind guide to such as are blind already.

3. Art thou skilfull in affairs of Commonweals? 'Tis a businesse very dangerous, changeable every hour, never constant, and whereof there can be no certainty. Lastly, art thou profitable to many, being excellent in any art? Weigh, how the name of profit is a name of servitude throughout all things, and therefore art thou lesse then
those

those to whom thou art profitable.

4. Observe therefore, that naturally thou dost estimate all things that are thine at too high a value, and dost depresse what belongs unto others too low, and that others proceed in the contrary; and thy worth is to be apprised, by how much others value thee.

5. Adde, that there can be no utility without use; and how many, and how necessary are those things for thee, which do not depend upon thee, that thy utility may be usefull.

6. Again, whatsoever thou considerest not, it is not thy self, but God, and nature which work and effect it by thy means. See then, that thou canst not consider the least part, and in a manner nothing of the things that are to be done. The most part thou dost by habit, that is, naturally; in what thing therefore is it that thou preferrest thy self before others?

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Conclude, to value thy self as thou art of thy self, and not to mingle thy self with the condition and judgement of others.

36. Meditation.

Of Covetousnesse.

I. **C**ONSIDER, that abundance of the goods of fortune is sought for to supply the needinesse of nature ; but it happens contrarily, that he that hath more, is more needy : for the poor man seeks only to beg a penny, the rich man looks after a pound, a Prince after millions. Wherefore there is nothing that satisfies the appetite, except a man sets a measure to himself, which in the beginning he may excellently do. In the mean time man runs on his course, and looseth this present life in affliction, and labour, that after some years he may live happily ; which years he knows not whe-

whether he shall live to see them: and if they do come, yet are they shorter then those that are passed, and in which he cannot enjoy himself, and he hath lost more by his folly.

2. And after riches are obtained, a greater care is necessary for the conservation of them: for thou hast more servants, for whose actions thou art a surety before God, and men. In the mean time they with their whole endeavours study to spend wastfully thy goods, as much as lies in their reach, or as much as thou dost not carefully keep from them: so that the care of keeping them is greater then the labour to attain them. And after this, where is the fruit, when as thou hast nothing but thy food, and raiment, others eat up the rest, thy eyes looking on, and seeing how they devour thy wealth, who will be most ingratefull towards thee?

3. But let it be granted, they are good upon whom thou bestowest thy

thy goods; yet they cannot be chosen without care, nor without care can thy goods be dispersed among them: and it is impossible but thou shouldest take many that are not such, and of those others thou canst be in no wise certain.

4. Besides, by how much thy wealth is more eminent, thy state is so much more hard, and dangerous: they move the greedy appetite of more, and more mighty ones, and provoke them to lay more treacherous snares against thee, and are defended with more labour and care.

5. Lastly, with how much study and care they are obtained, and kept, with so much grief and pain they are lost, and so much also is life more miserable without them, and death also when they are to be forsaken.

Conclude, to set a bound to the desire of wealth, that thou maist wish for no more but what may be conveniently obtained, and kept
with

with such labour, and care for change, that life may not be grievous to thee; for the rest to make use of life, and enjoy it, that this day thou maist serve God, being nothing solicitous for food or raiment.

37. Meditation.

Of Carnality.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that whereas carnall copulation is an action which by its nature belongs unto the whole substance of man, and is making of a man, seeing it is a decision of a certain the most pure, and elaborate substance, extracted out of all the parts of a living creature by a secret force in nature, there cannot be any deordination in it, but it must be a most grievous sin.

2. Adde, that whenas the injury which is done by the fornicatour to his

his own, and the body of his confederate, is contrary to an inclination of nature inbred, and not subject to him that hath it; and again, in that it is committed not against any one part in speciall, but against the whole person; the offence hereby becomes more hainous, then if it were against justice, or then if it were the cutting away of some member of the body.

3. Adde also, that the action is excessive momentary; as if one should gurry down large quantities of drink at one swallow: that it is most undecent; so that there is no man so filthy, that can endure to commit it in presence of another; nay, there are some beasts that will not suffer themselves to be seen: that it is not of any value or honour, but a thing appertaining to brute beasts, capable of no praise; nay, originally to insensible plants. And lastly, if *Boetius* may have credit, it is a pleasure not to be discerned; whereas those wretches who
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commit the crime, know not in what part they feel it, nor of what kind it is; insomuch, that it is not comparable to one smack of the tast, and is more discerned by the itching then the act: and yet notwithstanding this very thing is the origine of innumerable mischiefs, and an insinaring labyrinth beyond expression; for this time, which is so precious, is lost among jealousies and griefs, the soul pines away with bitternesse, fame and honour is neglected, friends are lost, fortunes dissipated, the body weakned, and cast into most horrible diseases, and torments, the conscience is vexed, God is rejected with hatred, and the whole man consumes away, soul, body, and substance, becoming vile, and contemptible to his very self.

Conclude, to observe watchfully, to esteem nothing as of light moment, that leads unto this misery, nor willingly to enter, by manner of sport, into dalliance of this so
great

great a mischief, by means whereof man is easily deceived, and in a sporting folly is utterly undone, in the sight of God, himself, and the world: abhorre the very appearance, and suspect the remotest allurements of the flesh, assuring thy self thou canst only get the conquest by flying.

38. Meditation.

Of the State of Wedlock.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that whereas the love of man to his wife is the most strong, and constant, among all animall affections; it is necessary, the inconveniences arising from thence, should also be most grievous. If thy wife be a fool, if a scold, if proud, or infamous, or sluggish, thou hast made thy self a slave to a most cruell prison: and how small a number are free from such like vices? or how canst thou be sufficiently

ficiently cautious, not to light upon
some one that is such?

2. But let it be granted, that she
is the best that may be; yet art thou
no longer at liberty to choose thy
friends, and familiar companions:
thou art tyed and must perforce en-
dure those who are of your mutuall
alliance, of what condition soever.
If thou lovest thy wife, all thy mi-
series are doubled, because thou dost
licence fortune to sway over thee in
two bodies; nay, every misery in-
vades thee with advantage, because
thy own sufferings grieve thee for
her sake.

3. Adde, with what affection,
and how perpetually must thou
serve her: thou must sit at home,
pleasures must be set aside, duties o-
mitted, and those sweet societies are
to be broken off to which thou wert
accustomed. Then if thou hast no
children, thy house is solitary, thy
bed unfruitfull, thy thoughts full of
tedious emulation, and thy endea-
vours seem unprofitable. But if thou
hast

hast children, thou must dread their infancy, have a watchfull care over their youth, and provide for every age. By a communication of affections, thou art so many times miserable, as thou numbrest so dear pledges. And who can promise thee they shall be good? if they are unfortunate, if wicked, if ungrateful, if foolish, if deformed, they must not be cast away: before thine eyes thou must perpetually bear the burthen of thine own folly.

4. All these, if thou diest before them, thou forsakest them being needy, and orphans. If they passe out of the world before thee, thou hast obtained a mournfull old age. Whichsoever happens, with what a torment of thy bowels art thou divided, and as it were torn away from so dear pledges? What should I speak of the attentive care of thy substance, whereby to nourish and enrich them? It is necessary, that the soul which descended from heaven, should be enslaved to dirt and

to beasts, and that precious leasure which was due to the consideration of heaven, must be imployed upon dung.

5. But perchance these miseries may not fall upon thee. See if ninety of a hundred are not drowned in these difficulties; and it is by grace from above, and not the force of thine own wisdom, if thou avoidest them. But thou through courage of thy mind, canst passe through all, and never burn in the midst of the furnace. A likely matter, since thou couldst not warrant thy self being free, but voluntarily didst run into the danger.

Conclude, if thou art free out of necessity, to blesse God, and live contented; if it be by choice of free will, to pray unto God to preserve it; being mindfull, how it is folly to accuse fortune, if being fairly admonished, thou perishest through thy own willfulnesse.

39. Meditation.

Of Gluttony.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how short the delight of meat and drink is, how it passeth in the twinckling of an eye, how slight it is, that except a man useth attention, he cannot observe it, and whensoever he hath attentively tasted a thing, he can rarely judge of it, except he have experience; how vile and infamous it is, that man for the most part will blush to acknowledge that he is led by it, and those kind of people are most contemptible, whom we term Parasites or Smel-feasts.

2. In the mean, how dishonourable is it, rising from the table to turn himself presently to sleep, or to discharge his belly over a close stool, and to be impotent in duties belonging to his calling,

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and wearisome to himself? How uncomely is it to expresse any affection to good chear? What shall I say of the crudities, and nauseating of the stomach after a feast, and of the diet also to be observed for severall daies, if no disease ensue?

3. Now he that hath got a custome of it, what is he good for? he casteth away his honour, forsaketh his friends, is made a scorn to his enemies, a dishonour to his parents, subject to idlenesse and sloth, and prone to all kind of wickednesse.

Conclude, to use such a mean of meat and drink, as may serve for health and action: if thou exceedest the usuall measure, let it be done to that purpose, that thy spirits may become more lively, and not be oppressed, and made sluggish: bridle thy mouth with reason, that by observation thou maist know what doth good, how much doth hurt, how much overloads: and thus

thus with giving of thanks accept what God shall provide for thee.

40. Meditation.

Of Drunkenesse.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the peculiar deformity of drunkenesse consisteth, in that the reason weakened with too much drink is compelled to serve the domineering appetite, so that a drunkard is truly a beast, nay, so much worse, as it is a thing more deformed, for to make reason a slave, then that it should be altogether wanting.

2. Weigh considerately the comportment of a drunkard, in his words, in his eyes, in his motion, in his face; how confounded and different is he from himself, and even ridiculous to children?

3. The life moreover of a drunkard is a shop of brawls and slaugh-

ters; he never passeth out of his house that he is not alwaies subject either to do some mischief, or suffer it, for what he acted when he was in drink, remains to be satisfied for when he is sober.

4. Add, that he is much weakened in the operations of his understanding, he betraies secrets, he rattles out his appetites, and discovers his designs, and actions, he is tracked out by all men, he is discerned, he is scorned; he is also unfit for the duties of a common life: how many mischiefs through drunkenness do fall upon a souldier, a mariner, or whosoever it is that hath any business of weight or moment committed to his charge? In truth who is there that will commit any slight matter to the care of a drunkard, since it is certain, that he will in his drink either betray the business, or spoil it by being circumvented?

5. Lastly, the life of a drunkard is base and odious, ingratefull to
ones

ones familiars, dishonourable to parents, infamous to all, and by custome utually arrives to that height of turpitude, that neither reason, nor body, can execute the ordinary functions of humane life.

Conclude, to abominate so filthy a kind of vice, and abhorre the company of drunkards as of so many beasts: when any occasion of drinking offers it self, if thou canst not avoid it, be thou the last, and trembling avoid every stroke: know assuredly, that there is poison contained in every cup that is drunk with excessse; shun therefore what thou art able every glasse that is coming towards thee, untill there creeps in some occasion whereby thou canst privily slip from the rest who are disturbed with drink. Thou canst not perswade a beast to drink more then is necessary; esteem therefore him unworthy of thy company, nor to be accounted a friend or kinsman, who induceth thee to the like.

41. Meditation.

Of Anger.

1. **C**ONsider, that anger is a desire of revenge; revenge, a part of justice, to wit, that he may suffer evil, who hath done evil, which is an act of reason; anger is therefore so much the more deformed, when it strayeth from reason, by how much it is naturall for it to be joined with it.

2. Again, anger is joined with grief: he therefore brings grief upon himself, who cherisheth his anger. See now, how senselesse it is, when-as another hath done thee an injury, that thou shouldst therefore frame and create a new scourge for thy self. He therefore who is angry rejoyceth his enemy, and completes his desire, which was, that he should bring upon himself misery and grief: but he who is patient, in that
very

very thing is a conquerour, since he hinders that his enemy cannot heap a mischief and sorrow upon him; for other miseries are therefore miseries, in that they sad the soul.

3. Farther, a man that is angry is an impediment also to himself: for whiles he betrayeth the mind that he hath to do a mischief, he both makes his enemy wary to prevent it, and that he also, disturbed with his own passion, sees not what is needfull to be done to effect his purpose.

4. But for a wise man, with whom should he be angry? for he that commits the mischief doth it either justly, and then it is an unjust thing to be angry for it; or through ignorance, and then it is unbecoming a wise man, for to wish any hurt to another, for any thing which was done by chance, or through ignorance: or lastly, out of passion, or through an evil affection; whom it is fit we should pity, for if it had been well with

him, he had never done the injury ; but being in a passion for the time, he was a beast : and as you are not angry with a dog, or a bear, so neither is it a thing becoming to be angry with such a man. But he that hath contracted an irrationall affection is so much worse then a beast, by how much he is more perseverantly and more deeply the same, that a passionate man is for a short space.

5. Adde to these, the turpitude of an angry man in his countenance, in the headlong rashnesse of his motions and gestures, not seeing what is fit to be done, speaking things unworthy himself, vexing himself, and hindring that very revenge which he most of all desireth. Lastly, anger is also hurtfull and causeth diseases in the body.

Conclude, so embrace meeknesse, and not to give the reins of reason to so unbridled, and inconsiderate an affection : when thou seest one angry, view, and consider in him, how

how in thy anger thou art wont to behave thy self, and learn to be vertuous by the consideration of the foulness of another mans vice.

42. Meditation.

Of Learning.

1. **C**ONSIDER, how that among those actions which are not vertues, and yet may be vertuously used, some of them do perfect other things, and some of them, man himself: and of those, some cultivate the body, and others the soul of man, in that wherein the soul is lord, and excellent above other things: and these necessarily excell all others, as much as the soul excelleth the matters of the others.

2. Adde, that whenas man is man, by reason of his soul, those among men ought to be most eminent, who take the care of instru-

cting the soul: whence it is, that naturally men do out of their hearts admire, and honour cordially such as are learned, and scorn the foolish that are rich; nay, they do moreover willingly believe, and submit themselves to the learned, as greater then themselves: from whence the Governours of Commonwealths are addicted to learning, and are accompted to know more then other men: neither can wealth, nor abundance be wanting to those that excell in power, except they despise them.

3. But the whole life of such as practise arts, and sciences, how much doth it excell others? their pleasures, purged from lces, are purely tasted; whenas corporall delights, disturbed with a tumult of passions, and sensible alteration, make that themselves cannot be known. They are constant and persevering; but the corporall passeth presently into lothsomnesse, and disdain. They are more easily ob-

obtained, because they stand in need of fewer instruments, and those more ready at hand. This life brings neither diseases to the body, nor detriment to fame, nor to our friends any defect of duty: nay rather it exhorts, and furnisheth us wherewith to avoid all these inconveniences.

4. Lastly, it is quiet, and free from infinite troubles, because it doth not mingle it self with such things, for the obtaining whereof strifes, and cares do besiege the life of man, with so much importunity, and by labours chained together draw it along in misery. But if we will cast our eyes upon such businesses, she playeth the great mistress, & by superiour discourses of a higher strain, doth rule and order them.

Conclude, to give thanks unto God, that he hath placed thee in such a rank of men. Resolve to use thy utmost endeavour in that Vocation, and to be fixed in that point whereon thou art pitched; to

those who are hardned with such blindnesse, that they can neither acknowledge thy happinesse nor their own vilenesse, and think themselves wise, whiles they attempt to seduce others, and bring them to their condition.

43. Meditation.

Of the study of Theology.

1. **C**ONSIDER, that the perfection of a humane soul consisteth either in this, that it self is made a partaker of those considerations which are of the highest rank and order, or that it extends its own to such things as are inferiour to its self; of the which, the first comes by contemplation, the other by action: and for both these ends sacred Theology doth most eminently instruct it.

2. For it reacheth to the highest contemplation of God, and those spi-

spirituall substances which are next unto him ; it treateth also of the beginnings, the end, substance, order, and constitution of all things ; it considereth the operation, providence, and command as well of God, as of spirituall substances, and of all kind of action which is proper unto man, and from whom neither the meanest of things can ly hid, nor the greatest escape his capacity : it is Theology that frameth, and regulateth the principles, and the Architectonick Idea.

3. Moreover, the profit of it is such, that it confirmeth our faith, governs our manners, and exempts a man from the servitude of pinning himself upon anothers judgement, concerning those things which become and are proper to man as man. But its eminency is such, that the Divine is alwaies to be called to counsell to advise what is to be done, and to give his approbation in all other Arts and Sciences whatsoever, especially such as are the

the most excellent among others.

4. It teacheth such as sit at the helm to govern kingdomes, and states, what is lawfull, what is honest, and what is necessary to be done. It instructeth the Lawyer how his own principles are to be understood, and how far they are to be extended. To the Masters of families, to Citizens, to Merchants, in one word, to all men when they are in deepest consultation concerning themselves, and their affairs, it is necessary, and the Princess of action; it is honourable before all men, tis admirable, and to be esteemed with reverence.

Conclude, in no wise to shew thy self unthankfull to the divine mercy, who hath vouchsafed thee so great a benefit: but when thou hast considered to what a dignity he hath lifted thee up, contend in humility, and the returning of a gratefull soul, that he may not repent him of so great a benefit, but that he would bestow upon thee that favour with
per-

perseverance to gather the desired fruit.

44. Meditation.

*The excellency of the State
of Priesthood.*

1. **C**ONSIDER, that a Priest is placed in the midst, between God, and his people, to carry and offer up the oblations of the people unto God, and bring down those graces which God shall please to bestow upon his people. And out of the former consideration he hath assigned unto him two offices: for he is as a Master to instruct, and direct the people in those things wherein they are to behave themselves in their duty towards God; by which dignity and title, he excelleth all the professors of other sciences and arts, and is seated upon the top of all honour whatsoever, which may be had from humane sci-

science or vertue, and consequently is to be preferred before any private person, in all kind of eminency, with whatsoever science or vertue he shall be adorned, by reason of his dignity.

2. Besides, he is set to be an Overseer of the solemn devotions of the people: and therefore seeing the obligation of the people towards God, is greater then any other obligation towards themselves, their country, or their parents; it is clear, no other office in the Commonwealth, whether it be of Judges, Commanders, or Kings is, or can be comparable to the office of Priesthood.

3. Moreover the businesse which Priests do deal in, since it is of the soul, and an eternity of salvation, or misery, which are infinitely higher and of more concernment then those goods which are administered, and taken care of by others; it is therefore to be esteemed a great perverseness to account the Priesthood

hood any other then the supreme dignity.

4. Now on the other part, concerning the Priests communicating of the mercies of God to man, it is a certain dignity which cannot be expressed, & not otherwise to be compared to other men, then as the Sea to rivolets, or the Sun, or the whole element of fire to one of our little fires; because those supernatuall gifts of God are to be received unitedly in him, which are particularly to be divided among the people, according to the diversity of measure whereof every one is capable; and this is not in such things as accompany our nature, but in the divine nature, by an effusion of the fulnesse of its very essence and perfection, overflowing the world, by vertue of the holy Ghost, through, and after Christs passion.

Conclude, to what great and high an excellency thou art called: doe not be sluggish, but chearfully follow God who calls thee, and he will

will make thee able for thy vocation : cast thy self upon him, but let it be thy whole self, with all the latitude of thy heart, because so great an honour requires more then all : follow him confidently, yet not trusting in thy self, but in him ; for gifts of such a nature are not of mortall birth, or of humane condition, but spring from God.

45. Meditation.

Of the Mission of the English Semmaries.

I. **C**ONSIDER, what obligation thou undergoest for the undertaking of that work which is destined for thee. First of all, thou hast bound thy self with an oath, which is a greater obligation then if thou wert only tyed by a vow, for a promise is strengthened by an oath, as it is manifest in the very promises of God: for in a vow thy faith and
truth

truth is obliged unto God, which is to be kept for the reverence thou owest unto him; but in an oath the very truth of God is engaged, to be observed with the same reverence.

2. Thou dost moreover incur the obligation of justice, receiving thy sustenance upon this condition and contract, that thou wilt assist with thy labours and endeavours thy Country in extreme want of men that are fit (which is to say, of such who are esteemed so, by them to whose care the nation it self is committed) to help her in spiritualls, that is to say, in the chiefeft and extremest necessity; which obligation doth necessarily prevent, and make void every vow of a thing that is not compatible with it.

3. Thou art also bound by office; which bond is far more noble then any private obligation of ones self, for it proceeds forth of an intention of a common good, which is more eminent then any private
pro-

profit, and it implies the authority of a superiour, for what is done by office is done by command. Since therefore publick authority excels by far, private power, it is a sin more grievous to act contrary to a precept, then contrary to a private promise.

4. Adde, that it is the command of such a superiour which thou hast not chosen to thy self, nor hath the people by any naturall power granted them by God among the gifts of nature imposed it upon thee; but whom God, and Christ our Lord by a speciall decree of his wisdom hath ordained, and commended to be obeyed.

5. Moreover, which way the obligation of charity doth bind other men, it ties thee first, and strongest, since the aforesaid obligations do not dissolve it, but encrease it, and strain it closer. If therefore it be lawfull for Monks for charity sake to leave their Cloisters, and deserts, how much more art thou bound

Divine Considerations. 165

bound not to forsake thy station, and preferre private profits, or ease, before the Church of God?

Conclude to go on with what thou hast undertaken, neither to be called aside with vain fancies, and aliene hopes, from the office which is imposed upon thee, nor to harbour any temptation of this kind.

46. Meditation.

*The Charge of a Seminary
Priest.*

I. **C**ONSIDER, how that God ordained the life of man in such a manner, that the perfection of charity may be had in any state; yet notwithstanding he appointed one to be more fit then another, for the obtainment, and exercise thereof; whom therefore we call more perfect, because charity is the form of perfection. See now in what degree your state is placed; and if so
be

be that you look upon the imployment whereunto you are called, the highest speculative action is to Evangelise, that is, to be the Master of such as contemplate: the practically, is to govern souls: both of them the chief works of charity, to teach the ignorant, and correct sinners. But to administer the Sacraments is an office altogether divine, not to be placed among humane actions.

2. If you look upon the condition of your life, it is to be among dangers, where you alwaies ought to be prepared to lay down your soul for your friend; amidst poverty, and necessity, that temporall gains may be alwaies accompted as dung, if you will rightly execute your Commission and Charge.

3. If you look upon your State, yours is such, which out of a perfect contemplation, and possession of charity, extendeth it self to the care of your neighbours, the action it self now not hindering,

ng, but encreasing charity.

4. If you look into the obligation wherewith you are bound, there cannot be a greater thought of among men. To God you are tied with an oath, as great a bond, as conscience hath any; to your neighbour, in piety; to your Country in the knot of humane necessity, in comparison of which the rest are to be despised.

5. In the consideration of your Office, you have the common good for your end, the highest, and most efficacious motive of a free action.

6. You are lastly bound with the necessity of a precept, seeing you set forth to execute the work in obedience to the Pastour of the Universall Church, then which there is none to be found in the whole earth more honourable, or of more obligation, whilst you do persevere in the obedience of your Pastour, whose very authority is derived from God by speciall ordination. Since there-

therefore the order of charity is to be greater, in those things unto which there is greater obligation, it is not to be doubted but that your labours are bedewed with the prime myrrhe of charity.

Conclude, that whatsoever are the greatest goods among men, are bestowed by God upon you: that it is not to be neglected, but that you must labour with an earnest care, that you may shew your self a worthy Minister.

47. Meditation.

Of the dignity of a Priest.

1. **C**ONSIDER, of how much dignity it is, and honour, to have received the administering of God himself, although it be only for honour sake, to bear him in your hands, to have him in your power, to give him to whom you will, and to deny him to whom you list. See, how

how the Priest hath received that which is not granted to the Angels, nor was ever lawfull for any but only to his blessed mother. See, how not only men, and Monarchs, but the Angels also fall prone before the knees of a Priest; not only to adore God in his hands, but also to reverence such power granted unto men. For without doubt it is a certain degree above their dignity, and sensing of the infinity of the Divinity.

2. Adde moreover, of what great power it is to sit a judge of men, not as concerning strifes and injuries, but as of their very persons; what they have done unbeseeming God, and themselves: judging it not by proofs, and allegations, but by the simple truth, and a view of the very spirit of the man himself. Of how much sovereignty is it, that the counsellours of Kings, and those that deal in mysteries of State are obliged to speak nakedly, and clearly, before them, and to conceal

nothing; to accuse themselves, and to undergo as well the orders, as the punishments which the Pope will impose upon them. And how great dignity is it that God doth not open, if the Priest doth shut, or loose, if there be any thing that he doth bind; that he hath put the kingdome of heaven in a manner into his hands, that he may bestow it upon such as he judgeth worthy, and keep him away whom he believeth unworthy.

3. These are things that are wonderfull, and of a fearfull altitude, and admiration, which we may yet in no wise doubt of, except we dare to reprove Christ of falsehood, and infidelity. And is there yet any one so foolish, that can think any thing besides this to be sublime, any thing else to be honourable, or to be esteemed in humane dignities?

Conclude for to strive with all your strength to obtain besitting vertues, as knowledge, prudence, and

and the love of God, and your neighbour: and knowing what is committed to your charge, condemn all things, besides what may conduce, or hinder you from the better performing of it. Be all wholly relishing of God, nor defile your self with secular affairs, which, since they are by so much inferiour, are very unbeseeming you and your calling.

48. Meditation.

The difficulties of the Seminary Priest in executing his charge.

1. **C**ONSIDER, specially, the charge that lies upon you: for it is commanded that you both make them good that are sinfull, and keep them so when you have made them. Of which the first requires that you remove the heart and mind of another, from those goods whereof he

hath a strong conceipt, to new ones; a businesse that is the hardest of hard things. And I adde, from goods of such a nature, that we see them with our eyes, and our senses; to such as are invisible, of which we can neither bring experience, nor perceive any sensible argument, or footstep, and they most opposite, and dissonant to those whereof we have the present possession.

2. Neither are you to deal by illustrious miracles in an apostolicall manner, which of their own force are able to move and shake a mans heart; but by reasons scarcely intelligible, and authorities to which they give no credit.

3. Nor are you to convince a nation which is yet rude, & unfashioned, and thereupon amuzed with a new splendor of reason shining upon them, or the curious strangenesse of such things as are denounced unto them; but rather, with men that are hardned, who have formerly fallen from the true faith, who have a
brawny

brawny heart to repulse your arguments, and who by perpetuall custome, are bred up, to believe that you are not to be believed, and how the things whereto you perswade them, are but mere impostures.

4. But now, when they are brought to goodnesse, neither can you nurse them up, and keep them in with civile laws, nor with ecclesiasticall discipline, nor with any outward splendour, or profit, as it were with milk, untill they should grow more ripe: but you have all the weight of humane diligence, and power, pressing backwards, and leading contrary waies. And you are to work by means that are purely spirituall, and not intelligible: which very thing, of what labour and difficulty it is, he doth not understand, who hath not had experience.

5. Adde to these, the incommo-
dities of your person, your dangers,
I say, and persecutions continuall,
and when it shall please God, ei-

ther a prison, or death. Oftentimes you shall have no certain home to put your head in, nor scarce a friend to whom you will not be accounted troublesome, if you make your accessse to his house. Your poverty is to be endured, and dissembled; and when there is wanting for your self, you must yet be giving something to others. Your adversaries are both abroad, and at home: and if you have gained any thing, there will be those who will lay perpetual snares for you, and backbite you. Others who are no waies better then you, will carry themselves insolently, and have many to help them: they will domineer and abound, who yet professe the contrary, when you are in want, who justly might enjoy those things, and do suffer in very deed what others do avoid by professing to suffer them.

Conclude, if you favour any thing of matters which are celestiall, to march on with courage in the
the

the path of life, and to strive to enter by the narrow gate. Do not through pusillanimity or feebleness of courage, or any other fault of yours, commit any thing that may make God esteem you unworthy of your calling ; bearing well in your mind, that the rewards are great, both of comfort in this life, and of beatitude in the next , which wait for you.

49. Meditation.

*Of receiving the Blessed
Eucharist.*

I. **C**ONSIDER, thou art to receive into thy heart and body thy God, and that he comes unto thee as great, and as glorious as he is accustomed to be seen by the heavenly inhabitants, the conduit, and fountain of being, essence, and of all goodness. How high is he? how glorious? how holy? how good?
I 4 how

how abundant? and how strong?
how almighty? and how wise?
how rich? how pious? how mercifull?
how every way to be honoured, and wholly desireable? such, and so great, doth the Son of God come to thee, and in the Son the Father, and in both the holy Ghost, one, and true God, alone immortal, alone working wonders, alone good; the same thy creatour, who hath bestowed upon thee the least of things, as well as the greatest; whatsoever thou hast, or art; whatever thou hast had, or hast been; or shalt have, or shalt be. He is thy preserver, from whom as a beam, or ray from the Sun, thou perpetually dost spring, and flow, who to repair the ruins of thy nature, falling away into a nothing, enriched thee with heaven, and earth, and all those things that are in them. For thy benefit it rains, and is fair; for thee hath he prepared the Summer, and Winter, Spring, and Autumne. Look round about,

about, what thou dost eat, with what thou art cloathed, what those things are that defend thee from the distemper of the air, and protect thee from the violence of enemies; what thou dost spend for the solace of thy senses, or dost take as medicines for thy health: thou shalt see the East, and West, the South, and the North, the surface of the earth, and the very bowells thereof, the waters, and the air, moreover the ages that are present, and to come, by Gods command (who cometh to harbour himself with thee) have conspired together for thy aid, and service.

2. Adde moreover the ministering spirits for the salvation of the Elect, and the watchfull eye of God moving all things, not sparing himself in Christ, in this banquet.

Conclude, with a trembling, and horreur of thy entire soul, and body; with the whole fulnesse, and submission of all thy affections; with the most inward, and most se-

ciet searching, and cleansing of thy conscience ; with a most enflamed, and efficacious love, to receive, embrace, bind fast, and keep so much of goodnesse, so much of grace, and felicity, streamed down by our Lord into thy bosome ; and convert thy self towards, and into it, with all thy whole strength and endeavour.

50. Meditation.

Of the most Blessed Sacrament.

1. **C**ONSIDERS, that Jesus Christ comes unto thee, to be personally received in this Sacrament, in whom the fulnesse of the divinity doth corporally dwell, to whom the holy Ghost is given without measure, who is the head, and fountain, and the worthy fulnesse of grace, science, and of all gifts and vertues.

2. He

2. He it is, that is the Generall, sent by God into this world perfectly to bring it into subjection under God. He is the executor of the divine providence, to perfect all his Counsell. He is the full, and universall dispenser of his vertues, and graces. He is the Prince of men, and angels, and the supreme head. He is at the last day to be the Judge, both of the living, and the dead, and who is to dispose of rewards, and punishments, according to the rate of their merits.

3. Again, it is he, who when he was God most blessed, took upon him the form of a slave, and wailing sent forth his first voice: for thee he did partake of the miseries of flesh, and blood, voluntarily suffering hunger, thirst, cold, heat, anguish, grief, fear also, and anger, sadness, confusions, emulations, envy, treacheries, dangers, infamy, reproaches, threats, and death it self, for thy sake.

4. He, who for thy love, powred
forth

forth the overflowing assaults of nature by a deadly sweat of bloud upon the earth, so preciouslly watered. He, who was contented for thee to be apprehended, after the manner of malefactours, to be drawn along, accused by false witnessses, to be unjustly judged, to appear before judges of all sorts, and to be made a scorn unto souldiers, servants, and contemptible slaves. He, who being innocent, blushed not to be whipped, to be crowned with thorns, to be covered with a robe of derision, to bear a reed in his hand with which he should be beaten, and to be offered up a scorn to the ungratefull people, though all in vain, to appease their causelesse envy. He, who was willing to carry a crosse upon his shoulders, to be nailed unto it, to be deputed among the wicked, to drink vinegar, and gall; and the discipline of thy peace being finished, to undergo the divorcement of soul, body, and the last drop of his bloud, that thou mightest be spared.

Con-

Conclude, what a banquet, what a charger of dainties, what an one, and how rich a potion of all health, hath God mingled for thee with his own hand? O unworthy man, if thou makest thy accessse with a luke-warm, or negligent affection! and how much more, if thou neglectest to come at all?

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A N I N D E X

of the

M E D I T A T I O N S

delivered in this Manuall.

Of the Beginning and End of Man.
fol.

1. Meditation. *Of the Creation of the World.* 1
2. Med. *Of the Fall of the Angels.* 3
3. Med. *Of the Creation of Man.* 5
4. Med. *Of Originall Justice.* 8
5. Med. *Of the Fall of Man.* 12
6. Med. *Of Sin.* 15
7. Med. *The Effects of Sin.* 17
8. Med. *Of Death.* 20
9. Med. *Of a Damned Soul.* 23
10. Med. *The Torments of a Damned body.* 26
11. Med. *The Condition of Adams posterity after his fall.* 28
12. Med. *Of Gods Mercy to the Jews.* 31
13. Med.

- 13 Med. Of Gods continued mercy and mans misery. 34
 14 Med. Of Mans Redemption. 38
 15. Med. How God became Man. 41
 16. Med. Of the Preparation for the Coming of our Saviour. 44

Of Christian Vertues.

- fol.
 1. Med. Of Faith. 49
 2. Med. Of the Church. 50
 3. Med. Of the Supremacy of the See of Rome. 52
 4. Med. Of Gods goodnesse. 54
 5. Med. Of Hope. 55
 6. Med. Of Charity. 57
 7. Med. Of Gods love to man. 60
 8. Med. Of love to our Neighbours. 63
 9. Med. Of Duty to our Parents. 65
 10. Med. The Duties which we owe unto our Country. 67
 11. Med. Of Obedience. 69
 12. Med. Of obedience to Superi-
 ri-

	<i>rious.</i>	71
	13. Med. Of <i>Liberality and Gratitude.</i>	74
	14. Med. Of <i>Rash Judgement.</i>	77
	15. Med. Of <i>Detraction.</i>	79
	16. Med. Of <i>Slanderers.</i>	81
	17. Med. Of <i>good works.</i>	84
	18. Med. Of <i>Government,</i>	87
	19. Med. Of <i>Scandall.</i>	90
	20. Med. Of <i>Rashnesse.</i>	92
	21. Med. Of <i>Martyrdome.</i>	94
	22. Med. Of <i>Perseverance.</i>	97
	23. Med. Of <i>observation of order and discipline.</i>	100
	24. Med. Of <i>Courage and Constancy.</i>	103
	25. Med. Of <i>Passionate Desires.</i>	105
	26. Med. Of <i>humble submission to the Divine Providence.</i>	107
	27. Med. Of <i>Prayer.</i>	110
	28. Med. Of <i>humility and reverence towards God.</i>	112
	29. Med. Of <i>heedfull attention to Gods Inspirations.</i>	115
	30. Med. Of <i>Reverence due to Saints.</i>	118
	31. Med.	

31. Med. Of Devotion to our B.
Lay. 120
32. Med. Of the daily sacrifice of
the Catholick Church. 123
33. Med. The Frailty of the Bo-
dy. 126
34. Med. Of the miseries of the
Soul. 129
35. Med. Of the knowledge of our
selves. 132
36. Med. Of Covetousnesse. 135
37. Med. Of Carnality. 138
38. Med. Of the State of Wed-
lock. 141
39. Med. Of Gluttony. 145
40. Med. Of Drunkennesse. 147
41. Med. Of Anger. 150
42. Med. Of Learning. 153
43. Med. Of Theology. 156
44. Med. The excellency of the
State of Priesthood. 159
45. Med. Of the Mission of the
English Seminaries. 162
46. Med. The charge of a Semi-
nary Priest. 165
47. Med. Of the Dignity of a
Priest. 168
48. Med.

- B.
20
of
23
Bo-
26
ke
29
ur
2
5
8
4-
1,
5
7
0
2
5
48. Med. *The difficulties of the
Seminary Priest executing his
charge.* 171
49. Med. *Of receiving the B. Eu-
charist.* 175
50. Med. *Of the most B. Sacra-
ment.* 178

*These titles although not in the
originall, are yet prefixed to the
Meditations, and this prece-
dent table adjoined for the be-
nefit of the Reader. if there be
any mistake pray pardon it;
and correct the errours in the
print thus.*

Fol. 69. lin. 2. for confesse read
conferre. f. 80. l. 13. for faul r.
faulc. f. 88. l. 10. for ther r. their.
f. 95. l. 23. for these r. those.
f. 115. l. ult. for willeth r. nilleth.
f. 118. l. 22. for deiformd r. dei-
form. f. 126. l. 14. dele thy.

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Omnia mea facta, dicta, sed
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cum à Deo solo sint, ad Dei
solius gloriam diriguntur.

Quæ vero male, cum illa
proprie mea sint, Jesu re-
demptoris mei misericor-
diæ, & Sanctissimæ Ecclesiæ
summique Pastoris ejus Cen-
suris humillime submit-
tor.

W. C.